

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



November 17, 2000

ALL-COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-108-00

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: HANDBOOK OF RESOURCES AND SERVICES FOR PERSONS WHO ARE
VISUALLY IMPAIREDREASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- ☐ State Law Change
- ☐ Federal Law or Regulation
Change
- ☐ Court Order
- ☐ Clarification Requested by
One or More Counties
- ☒ Initiated by CDSS

The Office of Services to the Blind (OSB) has released the updated, year 2000, *Handbook of Resources and Services for Persons Who Are Visually Impaired*. The "Handbook" is a multi-level resource and service directory intended to assist visually impaired individuals, as well as service providers, to identify needed resources and to understand the public/private service system for the blind.

The OSB is enclosing a copy of the "Handbook" and will provide additional copies upon request. We hope that you will share this resource with your Adult Services Programs staff. We know how difficult it is to be aware of resources for specialized groups, and we hope this directory will be helpful to your staff.

Please refer any requests for the "Handbook" to Steve Kugel, Resource Consultant for OSB, at (916) 653-1177. We will be glad to mail out copies to all who need this information.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynda Bardis'.

LYNDA BARDIS, Chief
Office of Services to the Blind

Enclosure

**HANDBOOK
OF
RESOURCES AND SERVICES
FOR PERSONS
WHO ARE
VISUALLY IMPAIRED**

PREPARED BY
THE OFFICE OF SERVICES TO THE BLIND
California Department of Social Services

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<http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/getser/blind.html>

2000 Edition

GREETINGS

FROM

THE OFFICE OF SERVICES TO THE BLIND

At the Office of Services to the Blind, we are very concerned about persons who are losing their vision. We know that it can be a difficult and frightening experience and that many people do not know what services and assistance programs are available.

We have prepared this *Handbook of Resources and Services for Persons Who Are Visually Impaired* to introduce you to many useful individuals, agencies, activities, programs, and services. We are assuming that you may not know very much about visual impairment.

This Handbook is meant to provide you with the kind of information that will lead you to the sources of the assistance you need. It cannot describe every activity in every community throughout California, but it will guide you to some very important beginning points.

We sincerely hope that we can be of service to you. Please use us as a resource. Call us about any of the information presented in this *Handbook* or about any other aspect of your vision-related concerns.

Lynda Bardis, Chief
Office of Services to the Blind

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I. INTRODUCTION

Losing vision can be extremely traumatic. No one gets this news without having a complex set of reactions such as denial, anger, fear, and depression.

If you have recently learned that your vision is diminished or likely to worsen in the future, you may be experiencing any or all of these feelings. You may be wondering how you will go on doing what you have always done; how you will maintain your independence; and how you will take care of yourself and your family.

Some people think that because they have diminished eyesight they are not a full person. You may be having similar thoughts; you may be feeling very alone. One of your concerns may be that you don't know where to turn for guidance, advice, assistance, support, comfort, information and instruction.

We at the Office of Services to the Blind want you to know that you are not alone. Although only you can make the adjustment to vision loss for yourself, there are many services and support systems that can help you. This *Handbook of Resources and Services* has been prepared to give you an overview of services available to you and to get you started on the path to a healthy and positive future.

First, let us just spend a few minutes expressing our thoughts about persons with visual impairments. We know from experience that blindness does not equal helplessness or despair. Millions of people in the United States who are visually impaired live happy, healthy and productive lives. They pursue relationships, jobs, hobbies, civic duties, volunteer work, parenting, and all the other components of human endeavor with the same effectiveness and satisfaction as fully sighted people. With training in the special skills of independence, individuals can accomplish just about anything they set out to do.

Our philosophy is that the essence of a person does not reside in the ability to see or to perform any particular physical function but rather in the spirit. The capacity to set the course of one's own life and the conviction to stay

on course despite the inevitable obstacles of destiny come from the will. If one such obstacle is the loss of eyesight, it is the inner person who makes the choice between defeat and adjustment. Thus, the onset of a visual disability need not be a barrier to an individual's ability to attain a rich and fulfilling life.

Blind and visually impaired individuals are an integral part of our society. They are employees, breadwinners, spouses, parents, and grandparents. They care about the same life functions as everyone else: earning a living, raising a family, being personally fulfilled, and making a contribution to others.

The most dangerous thing that you can do at this point is make assumptions about what you will or will not be able to do in the future. You are probably not familiar enough with the implications of visual impairment to fully know what to expect. Please seek the support and guidance of persons who are knowledgeable. People who have experienced vision loss, as well as professionals trained to assist persons with visual impairments, can be of tremendous help to you in this transition phase.

Before you make any major life decisions such as quitting a job, selling a house, moving in with adult children or others, abandoning hobbies or friends, please contact an agency providing services specifically for visually impaired individuals. Ask them about adjustment counseling, support groups, and peer counseling. You will find a list of California Agencies for Persons Who are Visually Impaired in the AResource Listings≡, or A *Yellow Pages*≡ section of this *Handbook*.

HOW TO USE THIS *HANDBOOK*

Think of this *Handbook* as a guidebook, describing major points of interest and telling you how to get to them. It is not intended to replace in-depth information about any particular program or service, but rather to let you know what is available. Once you find the programs and services that suit your needs, you can do further research about eligibility requirements, fees, and other important information.

Since most people who lose vision are more than fifty years of age, this *Handbook* is directed to the older population. These individuals are not usually connected to the social service system, and thus are not familiar with available resources. Information for visually impaired children and their families is not included. Families of visually impaired children should contact the Special Education coordinators in their local school districts for information and assistance.

Use this *Handbook* as a reference library. You don't need to read and try to absorb all of it at one time. Look through it, and study those sections that seem to respond to your immediate concerns.

Remember to call us at the Office of Services to the Blind if you have any questions or need further information. The number is (916) 657-3327.

II. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

Question: How many blind people are there in California?

Answer: Exact numbers are not kept on the blind population, however the Library of Congress estimates that approximately 1.75 percent of the general population is likely to have a visual impairment severe enough to prevent reading newsprint. It is estimated that approximately 525,000 Californians are visually impaired.

Question: What is the relationship between age and vision loss?

Answer: Many of the conditions, which cause vision loss, are associated with aging, such as Macular Degeneration, Cataracts, Diabetic Retinopathy, and Glaucoma. About half of the visually impaired population is over the age of 65.

Question: Does the term "blind" only refer to persons who are totally blind or have no useful vision?

Answer: The term "blind" technically includes persons whose visual acuity ranges from legal blindness to total blindness. However, the term "visually impaired" is increasingly used to indicate persons with visual impairment ranging from slight to severe. Only about 10 percent of the visually impaired population are totally blind. The rest have some useful vision.

Question: What does "legally blind" mean?

Answer: "Legal blindness" is the degree of vision loss established in state and federal law as the basis of eligibility for governmental services such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medi-Cal, and Rehabilitation services. Legal blindness is about 10 percent of normal visual acuity or 20/200 or a visual field limited to 20 degrees.

Question: What are the most common causes of vision loss?

Answer: They are Cataracts, Macular Degeneration, Diabetic Retinopathy, Glaucoma, and Retinitis Pigmentosa. Information about these conditions can be obtained from their respective associations.

Question: Do most blind people use Braille?

Answer: No. Only about 10 percent of blind individuals learn to read Braille. About half of visually impaired persons are over sixty-five years of age, and they do not tend to learn Braille.

Question: Is there any significance to the red tip on some white canes?

Answer: In the past, the red tip indicated that the cane user was totally blind. Currently, however, the red tip has no significance.

Question: Are most blind persons of working age employed? What kinds of jobs do they do?

Answer: Approximately 35 percent of blind and visually impaired persons of working age are employed. Blind persons still face a great deal of employer resistance. Employers fear they will not be able to produce competitively with sighted employees. Those who are employed work in a wide range of fields. There are visually impaired teachers, professors, lawyers, machinists, auto mechanics, aviation mechanics, customer service representatives, public administrators, social workers, psychologists, engineers, medical transcriptionists, court reporters, county, state, and federal workers, stock brokers, insurance agents, travel agents, real estate agents, salespersons, entrepreneurs, factory workers, etc.

Question: Have technological advances had an impact on blind people?

Answer: The development of synthesized speech and the widespread availability of inexpensive speech chips have opened a world of opportunities for visually impaired persons. The major

handicap of blindness, the lack of immediate personal access to printed information, has been effectively neutralized by the advent of personal computers which can output information in speech, large print, or Braille. The use of scanners which convert printed documents into computer files give blind persons access to printed materials in minutes rather than the weeks formerly required to have them recorded on tape or transcribed into Braille. Speech chips have rendered virtually all appliances usable by blind persons. There are talking clocks, calculators, gauges, scales, microwave ovens, remote control devices, as well as many kinds of tools with audible output.

Question: What kind of recreational activities do blind people participate in?

Answer: Blind persons engage in a wide variety of sports and recreational pursuits. Blind cross-country skiers ski with a sighted guide who skis beside or behind them and give them verbal clues about the environment. Blind golfers golf with a sighted partner who helps them keep track of their ball. Blind bowlers sometimes use a guide rail to keep their approach straight. Blind cyclists ride on tandem bicycles with a sighted "captain" riding on the front. Blind runners sometimes run touching hands with a partner or just with verbal directions from a fellow runner. There are blind swimmers, water skiers, wind surfers, horse trainers and horse racers. For the less ambitious, there are large print and Braille playing cards, tactile board games, puzzles, chess, checkers, and many other games.

III. SERVICES FOR PERSONS WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

In California, there is no centralized Bureau or Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Many different public and private agencies offer services directed to the various needs of the visually impaired population.

It is sometimes difficult to know what services the various agencies provide and how they can be contacted. The following brief descriptions are designed to give you an initial understanding of how the system works and how to access the services you need.

Several state and county departments provide educational, employment, financial, and health and welfare services. However, many very important services are provided by individual private non-profit agencies located throughout the state. These services include, but are not limited to, adjustment to blindness counseling, peer counseling, support groups, mobility training, training in independent living, low vision services, and various educational and recreational activities.

Since these private agencies are independent of each other, there is no uniformity throughout the state in what programs are available. You will need to check with the agency nearest you to find out what programs and services it offers. A list of California Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired is included in the "Yellow Pages" section of this *Handbook*.

The following is an overview of the available services and how they are accessed.

ADJUSTMENT COUNSELING AND SUPPORT GROUPS

Adjustment to vision loss can be a slow and painful process. The length and difficulty will vary with each individual and will include several stages. Losing sight--even a mild loss--is much like other losses. It usually requires a grieving process including denial, anger, depression and, finally, coping. Experiencing these phases is normal. However, the process should not be allowed to go on too long. The sooner you take steps to accept and cope with your vision loss, the sooner you can resume your normal activities and maintain control over your life. If you are having any trouble moving through and beyond these stages of loss, please reach out for help.

The adjustment process can be made easier and shorter with help from caring professionals and from others who have gone through the same process.

Support groups are a wonderful source of inspiration. While providing strong emotional support, they also supply a great deal of useful information about resources available in the community and about coping strategies that have worked for others. Some support groups are focused on a specific condition such as Diabetes or Macular Degeneration. Others are for any one experiencing sight loss. Some groups include spouses or significant others while others are only for the individual.

Whatever the design or make-up of the group, it is almost inevitable that good positive results happen from people coming together and sharing feelings and encouragement. Individual counseling is also available both from trained professionals and from peers.

Most larger agencies, such as the Braille Institute in Los Angeles, the Rose Resnick Lighthouse in San Francisco, and the Society for the Blind in Sacramento, as well as many of the smaller agencies, provide a variety of counseling and support options. Check with the agency closest to you. See the listing of California Agencies for Persons Who Are Visually impaired in the "Yellow Pages" of this *Handbook*.

INDEPENDENT LIVING

Perhaps the most important services the newly visually impaired individual needs are those directed to developing the skills of independent living. The importance of being able to take care of oneself cannot be overemphasized. Visually impaired people, including totally blind people, can and do perform the Activities of Daily Living (ADL) independently and competently. Even if you live in the home of another or in a group living situation, it is essential that you learn to take care of these functions yourself.

Activities of ADL include grooming and hygiene, meal preparation and clean-up, wardrobe and household management, handling of personal finances including paying bills, communication, and medication management. Learning these skills may be challenging for persons with limited vision, but mastering them is central to the maintenance of self-esteem and self-direction.

One of the major challenges you will face, as a newly visually impaired person is to maintain control over the decisions affecting your life such as where and how you live. The more independent you are, the more autonomy you are likely to maintain. Family members may rush to your side to help and protect you. They are well intentioned and acting from their love and concern. However, if their efforts to assist you prevent or discourage you from pursuing the rigorous process of learning to be independent, neither you nor they will be satisfied with the results. You will not want to be treated like a child who cannot take care of himself or make adult decisions. Others may tire of the responsibility of meeting your basic needs. If both you and they adjust to your vision loss and you maintain your independence, all of your relationships will remain healthier and more satisfying.

Learning independence skills is simply a matter of mastering alternative techniques for doing each task. Competent teachers can show you many ways to accomplish all of the ADL. There is ADL training available both from the California Department of Rehabilitation (CDR) and from many private agencies for the blind.

The DR has two kinds of programs, the Counselor/Teacher program, through which services are provided in the client's homes and residential programs through which services are provided in one of several facilities.

In the Counselor/Teacher program, skilled teachers come to your home and assist you with all aspects of daily living, organizing your kitchen so you know where everything is, showing you how to keep colored clothing sorted, teaching you how to move around safely in your house and neighborhood, etc.

Counselor/Teachers can also purchase assistive devices that help you function independently.

To apply for Counselor/Teacher services, contact the CDR District Office nearest you. A list of these offices is included in the "Yellow Pages" of this *Handbook*.

The residential style program offered by the CDR is provided at the Orientation Center for the Blind in Albany, the Living Skills Center in San Pablo and the Foundation for the Junior Blind in Los Angeles. Participants live in dormitories for several months, attending classes during the day in all phases of independent living. This is a more intense way of learning to cope with sight loss and has proven to be very effective. Its advantage is that it removes the newly visually impaired person from the environment in which he or she may receive so much help from family and friends, that independence is harder to achieve.

To apply for any of these services, contact the CDR District Office nearest you. A list of these offices is included in the "Yellow Pages" of this *Handbook*.

The other source of Independent Living Skills training is the private non-profit agencies serving the blind and visually impaired mentioned above. The larger agencies provide individualized training in the homes of clients on all aspects of ADL. Many also have classes at the agency. Contact the agency nearest your residence to inquire about these services.

LOW VISION SERVICES

Many people don't realize that Low Vision Services are a specialty unto themselves. Low Vision Services are very important, as they help individuals strengthen and make maximum use of residual vision. These services consist of a low vision evaluation, identification of appropriate low vision aids, training for the user, and follow-up.

Qualified professionals must do low vision evaluations. A simple check of visual acuity is not a low vision evaluation. Low Vision Specialists are trained to analyze the individual idiosyncrasies of each person's vision and to select magnifying lenses and lighting devices that best complement that vision. The specialist will train the client in the use of low vision aids. Many Low Vision Clinics will let clients take devices home on a trial basis.

Consult the Directory of Low Vision Services in California in the "Yellow Pages" section of this *Handbook* for the service nearest you.

EMPLOYMENT

In California, the CDR is responsible for providing employment services to persons with disabilities. These services include counseling about career or job selection, resume preparation, job search skills training, peer group support, and the provision of various kinds of prevocational and vocational training.

Currently, the CDR is operating under a policy known as "Order of Selection." This means that if there are more applicants than they can serve at any given time, only the most severely disabled applicants will be served. Therefore, there is frequently a waiting list for services. To be eligible for CDR's employment services, applicants must have a vocational goal. That is, they must be desirous of finding full time employment.

The DR has branch and district offices throughout the state. A list of these offices is included in the "Yellow Pages" of this *Handbook*. Each district has a Rehabilitation Counselor for the Blind (RCB) whose responsibility it is to assist visually impaired clients to prepare for, find, and secure employment.

The DR can pay for pre-vocational training, vocational training, college or university, books, training materials, and equipment needed for employment such as uniforms, tools, computers, etc. To find out about eligibility requirements and how to apply for rehabilitation services, call the District Office nearest you and ask for the RCB.

READING SERVICES

One of the most important activities in life is the ability to read. Those of us who lose part or all of our ability to read realize what a monumental inconvenience this can be. From the daily newspaper, to our favorite books and magazines, to instructions on prescription medicines and labels on cans and packages in the kitchen, the need to get information from the printed word is constant and crucial.

There are several methods available to people whom cannot read standard print to obtain most or all of these kinds of information. Some alternatives to standard print are large print, Braille, recorded material and computer-produced synthesized speech.

LARGE PRINT

For people who need larger than standard size print, there are many options. Books, magazines, dictionaries, thesauri, cookbooks, news periodicals, games, and many other useful materials are all published in large print.

NEWSPAPERS

“The New York Times” publishes a weekly review of its major articles. Contact the New York Times Large Type Weekly:
P. O. Box 15647, Worcester, MA 01615. (800) 631-2580

“The World at Large” is a newsmagazine in large print.
Contact: The World at Large, P.O. Box 1903300,
Brooklyn, NY 11219. (888) 285-2743

MAGAZINES AND BOOKS

Many publishers, such as the Reader's Digest Corporation, publish books and magazines in large print. For more information about large print and a comprehensive list of publishers, see the Large Print Publishers list in the "Yellow Pages" section in this *Handbook*.

RECREATIONAL MATERIALS AND HOUSEHOLD APPLIANCES

Many games are available in large print including playing cards, board games, and crossword puzzle books. If you live near a service agency serving individuals with visual impairments, you will most likely find them at their "store." If not, there are catalogs through which these can be ordered. A list of these catalogs is included in the "Yellow Pages" section of this *Handbook*.

Many household appliances have been adapted with large print or markings. These include alarm clocks, kitchen timers, thermometers, scales, yardsticks, rulers, and other measuring devices. These are also described in the catalogs listed in this *Handbook*.

Large print overlays for telephone dials can be extremely useful and can be purchased from the same sources mentioned above.

FOOD AND HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTS

People use many different ways of marking these items. One of the simplest is to add your own label, on which you or some one else has written the important information, with a bold marker pen in large letters.

MEDICINES

Ask the pharmacist to either type in large print or hand write in large print with a bold pen the instructions for each bottle or package of medications. Do not hesitate to let your doctor or

pharmacist know that you need this service. They will do it.
You only need to ask.

AUDIO READING SERVICES

For persons who cannot read print of any size, many alternatives are available.

NEWSPAPERS

Newspapers are available in three principal ways: Radio Reading Services, telephone access, and from the Internet.

Radio Reading Services is available in many communities throughout the country. They consist of broadcasts transmitted over special closed circuit radio or T.V. channels. Volunteers read local newspapers, publications, and a wide variety of local and current information, relevant to their communities. Listeners need a special receiver, which they obtain from the service. A list of these services, which are available in California, is included in the "Yellow Pages" section of this *Handbook*.

Telephone access to a newspaper is relatively new in California and its availability is spreading throughout the state. Newspapers are transmitted electronically to a central receiving station. Readers can telephone into this station at their convenience and have the option of several newspapers, which are read electronically via synthesized speech. The reader can select articles, move around in the articles, skip material, browse, and reread articles all through the use of the telephone touch tone keypad. For information about the Sacramento service, call the Sacramento Public Library at (916) 264-2853. For information about the Los Angeles services call (213) 228-7034.

A world of information is available on the Internet, including many newspapers and magazines. Access to the Internet and other computer applications is available to visually impaired and blind persons through the use of screen enlargement programs, synthesized speech output and Braille output. For

information on these technological solutions, see the “Technology” section in this *Handbook’s* “Yellow Pages.”

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

The largest source of audio books and magazines in the country is the National Library Service (NLS), which produces tens of thousands of titles every year on cassette tape and audio disk. This service is accessed through a network of regional libraries. In Northern California, the responsible Regional Library is the Braille and Talking Book Library in the State Library in Sacramento (916) 654-0640, and in Southern California, it is the Braille Institute of America in Los Angeles (213) 663-1111. There is no charge for this service. The NLS publishes a bi-monthly listing of all new titles, which is distributed to all patrons. The adapted cassette recorders and Talking Book machines required for listening to the books are provided free of charge by the NLS.

Many other agencies and publishers also produce books and magazines in recorded form. For a comprehensive list of such publishers, see the listing of Producers of Audio Books and Periodicals in the “Yellow Pages” section of this *Handbook*.

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

The largest producers of educational materials are the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) and Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFBD).

The APH primarily produces materials for school age students. For information on their available publications, see the list of “Catalogs” in this *Handbook*.

The RFBD produces educational materials for students and non-students alike. If you need a training manual, cookbook, instructional material or any other educational item, RFBD will record it for you. There is a one-time registration fee. For more information, contact the RFBD, which is listed in the

Directory of Producers of Recorded Books and Periodicals, included in this *Handbook*.

PERSONAL MATERIALS

For reading your mail, newsletters, magazines, and items of personal business, you will probably need a volunteer or paid reader. Many agencies serving the blind and visually impaired offer volunteer reader programs. Call the agency nearest you and ask if they provide volunteer reading services.

BRAILLE

Since its invention, in the mid nineteenth century, by blind Frenchman, Louis Braille, the Braille code has been used by millions of blind and visually impaired persons around the world, in dozens of countries, and in many languages, to achieve literacy and to gain access to a world of knowledge and information.

Braille is a systematic code consisting of "cells" of six raised dots which can be used in hundreds of configurations to represent letters, numbers, punctuation marks, and common letter groupings. The Braille code is adaptable to various kinds of notation such as math, music, and computer language.

Not all-blind people read Braille proficiently. In fact, most Braille users are fairly slow readers, and many visually impaired people never learn it at all. This is an extremely unfortunate fact because Braille is an invaluable tool for persons who cannot read print.

The slow reader will not want to use Braille for reading lengthy materials such as books, newspapers and magazines. These items are available in other media. However, any individual who can't read print, must have a note taking system for communicating with him or herself. For example, think of the ever increasing volume of numbers in our lives that we must produce upon request such as credit card numbers, account numbers, Social Security and drivers license or state ID numbers, health plan numbers, loan numbers, etc. Imagine having to memorize all of these numbers or not having access to them without assistance. Another vital use of Braille is for making lists of names, addresses and phone numbers. We all use the telephone dozens of times a day. With a Braille Rolodex a visually impaired

person can make all of his or her calls without having to wait until some one else is available to read the numbers. Recipes, "to do" lists, appointment schedules, and instructions of all kinds are also very useful in Braille.

Learning Braille has two components: sensitizing the fingertips so that they can feel the dots, and memorizing the dot configurations. Braille Grade 1, consists of the alphabet and the basic punctuation marks. Grade 2, includes short forms of words and contractions, which represent syllables. Grade 3, is very contracted, something like shorthand.

Grade 1 is relatively quickly and easily mastered by any one who is motivated. Many persons go well beyond Grade 1. Even when beginning in their sixties and seventies, many master Grade 2.

There are several sources of Braille instruction. Most private agencies for the blind and visually impaired offer Braille lessons usually taught individually by a Braille instructor.

The Department of Rehabilitation offers Braille instruction through its Counselor/Teacher program mentioned earlier in this Section. Most Counselor/Teachers give Braille lessons in the client's home as a part of a rehabilitation program.

The Hadley School for the Blind is also an excellent source. This is a correspondence school for persons who are blind and visually impaired. All lessons are mailed to the student's home and study is done at the student's own pace. Hadley has a very good Braille course of study. The Hadley School can be contacted at 700 Elm Street, Winnetka, IL 60093-0299, (800) 526-9909.

Finally, there are Braille instruction books designed for the person who can study and learn independently. However, most people find that it is easier to complete the challenge of learning Braille with either a personal instructor or under the supervision of a school such as Hadley.

A good source of books and magazines in Braille is the National Library Service through its regional libraries, the Braille and Talking

Book Library in Sacramento and the Braille Institute in Los Angeles. There are also many other sources of Braille materials including religious books and pamphlets, computer manuals, cookbooks, "how to" books, etc. For a list of publishers of Braille materials, contact the Office of Services to the Blind, (916) 657-3327.

IV. OTHER SOCIAL AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

SENIOR SERVICE SYSTEM

In addition to services designed for blind and visually impaired persons, there are other social service programs available. For example, there is an extensive service system for seniors. Operated by the Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), the senior service system provides a wide variety of important services. An AAA serves every community, and every AAA operates a Senior Information and Referral (SIR) service.

The SIR's are staffed by knowledgeable professionals who can inform you about everything that is available to seniors in your community. These services include, but are not limited to, transportation and escort services, congregate lunch programs, home delivered meals, adult day care, adult day health care, housing and telephone reassurance. A wide range of recreational and educational activities is also provided at Senior Centers.

The names under which these Information and Referral services are listed in the phone book vary from community to community, but generally they are called Senior Citizens Information and Referral Service. When neither you nor Directory Assistance (411) can find the right listing, phone your community library.

IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

For persons who cannot live independently in their own homes without some assistance, the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program provides homemaking and chore services. An IHSS Social Worker will go to the home of each applicant and assess the need for service. The IHSS providers do house work, grocery shopping, meal preparation, laundry, and other chores necessary to maintain a safe and healthy home environment. To learn more about the IHSS program and to find out whether or not you are eligible, contact your local County Welfare or Social Services Department. Ask for the In-Home Supportive Services Intake Section.

THE CALIFORNIA IDENTIFICATION CARD

For persons who do not qualify for a Driver's License, the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) issues the California ID Card. This is a picture identification card that looks very much like a driver's license and can be used as identification in all of the same ways that Driver's Licenses are used.

It is very important to obtain one of these cards as soon as possible. You can get one from any DMV branch office. While an appointment is not strictly necessary, you may find it preferable to make an appointment to avoid a long wait. You will need your birth certificate, Social Security number and \$6, for the card, it is good for 6 years. Seniors 62 and older will pay \$3 for 10 years.

TRANSPORTATION

When driving a vehicle becomes difficult or even dangerous, getting from one place to another becomes a challenge. Continuing with your daily routine, going to the market, dentist office, doctor and other destinations, is very important, but finding reliable transportation is difficult.

Unfortunately, for Californians who do not drive automobiles, transportation is one of the biggest problems. Throughout the State, there is a system of regional transit systems. Some of them are single county entities; some of them are jointly operated by multiple counties. In the 58 counties in the State, there are about 80 of these systems, and they form the foundation of the public transportation system.

In your area, the public transit agency may contract with private companies to provide transportation to people with disabilities or it may provide such specialized transportation directly. Contract agencies frequently use names such as "Dial-a-Ride" or "Paratransit."

The quality and responsiveness of these services, as well as eligibility requirements and fees, vary from community to community, so you will need to contact your local transportation authority to learn more about the transportation options available to you.

V. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

SOCIAL SECURITY (OASDI)

Eligibility for Social Security is authorized by Title II of the Social Security Act. The official name is Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance, or OASDI. The amount of monthly income you may obtain from Social Security is determined by how much you have contributed to Social Security. It is not based on your financial need. In other words, if you have worked for a certain number of quarters and paid into the Social Security fund, you will be able to collect payments based on your contributions.

Contact the Social Security office nearest your residence to get more information about the various Social Security programs.

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY INSURANCE (SSDI)

Eligibility for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) is also based on your connection with the work force. If you have worked for a certain length of time and become visually impaired, you may be eligible for SSDI. This is an extremely complicated program. The Social Security administration provides several pamphlets and brochures about its programs. You may want to contact the Social Security office near you to request these materials and to ask for consultation.

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI)

Eligibility for SSI, authorized by Title XVI of the Social Security Act, is based on financial need. The SSI replaced the former Aid to the Blind, Old Age Security, and Aid to the Totally Disabled programs in the mid-1970's. The amount that you may receive will depend on your income and resources. You should inquire at the Social Security office nearest you. Applications may be made in person or over the phone by the visually impaired individual. If you apply over the telephone, a Social Security representative will complete the

application for you and mail it to you for your signature.

Phone numbers for Social Security offices are listed under United States Government, Department of Health and Human Services, in your telephone directory.

TAX BENEFITS

People who are legally blind are eligible for a special deduction on their income taxes in addition to other deductions they may be entitled to. You will need a statement from your eye doctor affirming your visual impairment; and it must be attached to your tax return. The amount of these fixed deductions depends on your marital status. The amount also changes from year to year. If you prepare your own taxes, the IRS should be able to tell you how much you can deduct.

HANDICAPPED PARKING

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) will issue to a visually handicapped person, a handicapped parking placard that is transferable from vehicle to vehicle whenever the person with sight loss is a passenger. It is usable in specially marked handicapped parking spaces and will enable your driver to park free at parking meters. It must be renewed every year, and there is a substantial penalty for misuse, such as lending it to friends. Call your local DMV office for information.

FREE POSTAGE

The U.S. Postal Service allows visually impaired persons to send and receive books, recorded material and certain types of equipment and other mail free of charge if they are registered at the local Post Office.

Send for a copy of the pamphlet, "Mailing Free Matter for Blind and Visually Handicapped Persons," from the Office of the Consumer Advocate, U. S. Postal Service, Washington D.C. 20260-6320.

REDUCED BUS AND RAIL FARES

Most national rail and bus companies offer discounted fares to persons with disabilities and their travel companions. Many local transit authorities offer their own reduced fare card for disabled persons. Almost always, proof of vision loss and a picture identification card are required. Photo ID's can be obtained from the Department of Motor Vehicles.

DISCOUNTS AT PARKS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

The Department of Parks and Recreation offers a Disabled Discount Pass. *This is a lifetime Pass* issued to applicants found eligible and for a \$3.50 fee.

The Pass entitles you to a 50 percent discount on basic facility use fees, including day parking, camping, and boat/day parking. The Pass may be used at all parks and recreation sites operated by the State of California except Hearst Castle at San Simeon. Applications may be obtained from the Department of Parks and Recreation, Disabled Discount Pass Program, P. O. Box 942896, Sacramento, CA 94296-0001. Also, State Parks Store at (916) 653-4000.

U.S. GOVERNMENT

The U. S. government also offers a discount pass. It is called the Golden Access Passport, and it allows you to use national parks, campgrounds, and other federally operated recreational facilities either free or at reduced rates. For more information about the Golden Access Passport, call the Federal Information Center at (800) 688-9889.

Many local tourist attractions such as museums, amusement parks, wildlife reserves, and the like also offer discounts to persons with disabilities. Always remember to ask if the attraction you are visiting has a special rate for persons with disabilities.

ASSISTANCE DOG SPECIAL ALLOWANCE PROGRAM (ADSA)

The State of California provides a monthly payment of \$50 or \$35 to individuals with disabilities who use guide, signal or service dogs to help pay for the food, grooming, and health care costs of their dogs.

To be eligible for the Assistance Dog Special Allowance (ADSA) program, an individual must meet all four of the following criteria:

1. Live in California;
2. Be blind, deaf/hearing impaired or disabled;
3. Use the services of a guide, signal or service dog; and
4. Receive either Supplemental Security Income/State Supplementary Payment (SSI/SSP), In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program, or Social Security Disability Income (SSDI).

To obtain an application or more information about the ADSA program, contact the

California Department of Social Services
Office of Services to the Blind
744 P Street, M.S. 6-94
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 657-2628 V/TDD

Applications are available in large print or on a 3.5-inch floppy disk. Eligibility will be verified and every application either will be approved or denied within thirty days. Eligibility for the program starts the month in which the application is received.

VI. MEDICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

Many California residents who are blind or visually impaired may be eligible for two public medical assistance programs. One is Medi-Cal, which is part of the nation's Medicaid system. The other is Medicare; a federal program designed to help with the cost of medical and hospital care for elderly and disabled persons.

MEDI-CAL

Medi-Cal is a state and federally funded program for low-income people, which pays for medically necessary treatment services, medicines, medical supplies and durable medical equipment--such as canes, crutches, walkers and wheelchairs.

You are automatically eligible if you are receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS). However, even if you do not receive benefits from these programs, you may still be eligible if your income and resources are low enough.

This program, although jointly funded by both the Federal Government and the State of California, operates under Federal law. The rules set by the U.S. Government require California to provide certain mandatory services. These include:

- Physicians' services
- Inpatient hospital care
- Outpatient hospital care
- Laboratory and X-ray services
- Skilled nursing facility services
- Home health services, and
- Rural health clinic services

California has chosen to add to this list of basic requirements. Some of these additional benefits are:

- Rehabilitation
- Physical therapy
- Occupational therapy
- Speech therapy
- Audiology
- Home health care visits; and
- Medications.

The Medi-Cal program is administered by each county in California. Contact your County Department of Social Services to find out more about Medi-Cal and whether or not you are eligible. Ask for the Medi-Cal Unit.

MEDICARE

Medicare is a Federal health insurance program for aged and disabled persons. Unlike Medi-Cal, entitlement to Medicare services is not based on an individual's financial status. Rather, it is a health insurance program funded through employer and employee payroll taxes.

To qualify for Medicare, an individual must be:

- Receiving Social Security benefits;
- A retired employee of the federal government; or
- Receiving Railroad Retirement benefits.

For people who are not disabled, eligibility for Medicare begins at age 65, even if they opted to begin receiving Social Security retirement benefits at age 62.

Persons under the age of 65 who are disabled may be eligible for Medicare if they have received Social Security or Railroad Retirement disability benefits for at least 24 months. The disabled adult child of a Medicare recipient, or deceased Medicare recipient, is also eligible to receive Medicare benefits.

ADMINISTRATION

The Medicare program is administered locally by private insurance companies who are called “carriers.” The Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), a federal agency within the Health and Human Services Department, contracts with private insurance companies in each area of the country to process claims for benefits from people who are enrolled in Medicare. However, you apply for Medicare at your local Social Security office; and questions concerning benefits should be directed there as well.

BENEFIT STRUCTURE

Medicare benefits are divided into Parts A and B. Part A covers hospital care, nursing home and home health care services. Part B covers outpatient hospital care, physician services, physical therapy, medical transportation, durable medical equipment and prostheses. Administration, scope of service, authorization and appeal procedures is different for both Part A and Part B.

PART A

Part A of Medicare covers institutional, or hospital and similar types of care. It is free for those who have contributed to Social Security. For those who have not contributed, Part A can be purchased by persons over 65 although the price is very high.

PART B

Part B services include:

- Physicians services
- Outpatient hospital services
- Rural health clinic care
- Outpatient rehabilitation
- Physical and occupational therapy
- Speech pathology
- Prosthetic devices
- Durable medical equipment; and diagnostic tests.

Medicare does not cover services that are considered routine or preventive. This includes routine physical examinations, dental care (except for emergency restorative services or where the jaw or bone supporting the teeth is involved), eye sight examinations, eyeglasses or contact lenses (except when associated with cataract surgery), hearing examinations, hearing aids and orthopedic shoes (except when required because of the symptoms of diabetes.)

COSTS FOR PART B SERVICES

There is an initial deductible of \$100 per year for Part B services. This amount is satisfied only by the recipient paying charges that Medicare would allow, which may be less than the full amount of the bill. In addition, recipients are responsible for paying a 20 percent co-payment for most services and devices provided under Part B. Under certain circumstances, physicians and other providers are allowed to charge more than Medicare will pay. You, the beneficiary, are required to pay for these extra charges.

Although physicians and suppliers of equipment may charge more than Medicare allows, some have agreed to provide services and equipment on an “assignment” basis. This means they will accept the amount that Medicare allows for a service or device as payment in full without making an additional charge. Medicare pays 80 percent of this allowed amount and you; the beneficiary must pay the remaining 20 percent. If a supplier has not agreed to assignment the full market price may be charged. The beneficiary is expected to pay any amount, which exceeds what Medicare allows. This can be a substantial amount.

NON-GOVERNMENT MEDICAL SERVICES

In addition to Medi-Cal and Medicare, there are several programs, which assist with the costs of medical treatment related to blindness prevention and vision preservation:

NATIONAL EYE CARE PROJECT

Provides medical and surgical eye care to U.S. Citizens and legal residents aged 65 and over who don't have an ophthalmologist. Call (800) 222-3937 or (415) 561-8520 for more information.

PREVENT BLINDNESS AMERICA

Call (800) 331-2020 for free information about eye exams, etc.

PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURER=S PRESCRIPTION DRUG INDIGENT PROGRAM

Provides free prescription drugs. Contact the Senate Special Committee on Aging, Indigent Patient Programs, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room G31, Washington, D.C.

NEW EYES FOR THE NEEDY

Will provide eyeglasses free of charge if no other source of payment is available but will not pay for examinations. Call (973) 376-4903.

VISION IS POSSIBLE

Pays for eye care at UC Davis Medical Center for people from El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sierra, and Yolo Counties. Patients must have no other source of payment. Contact the Northern California Lions Sight Association at (916) 344-5232.

There may be similar programs in other communities throughout the state. Contact the service agency nearest you and ask about assistance with medical costs.

VII. ORIENTATION AND MOBILITY

Orientation and Mobility is the term that refers to the techniques used by visually impaired persons to “travel” safely and efficiently. In this context, “travel” means moving around inside the home or outside in the community.

It includes walking with or without a mobility aid such as a white cane or dog guide; and using all modes of transportation such as buses, trains, taxis, and airplanes.

Orientation refers to the relationship between a person and the physical space that surrounds him/her. It includes conceptualizing spatial relationships such as right angles for negotiating intersections, and understanding the layout in one’s own home or office for confident and efficient functioning at home or at work.

Mobility refers to techniques used to move safely through the environment while getting from Point A to Point B.

For visually impaired persons, mobility can be a particular challenge--literally to move about safely in an environment full of obstacles and pitfalls, yet mobility is essential to personal and professional progress, to productivity, to independence, and self-esteem.

Persons of all degrees of vision loss can be trained to move around safely in their homes, on their jobs, and in their communities. State certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists teach the techniques of achieving independent mobility both to low vision and to totally blind clients. Such techniques include the safe and efficient use of vestigial vision as well as the use of mobility aids. The most common mobility aid is the white cane, followed by the dog guide, usually referred to in California as a Guide Dog.

NEW MOBILITY AIDS

Rapidly developing technology is bringing new mobility aids to the market. Some of the more promising of these are: Talking Signs[™] that transmit information to hand-held receivers which announce the location of important features such as public telephones, restrooms, street addresses, traffic signals, and the like; portable geographical positioning systems which

let users know precisely where they are, and computerized city maps which provide users with information on how to get to their destinations, and canes that beep and/or vibrate to indicate objects not only at ground level, but at waist and head level.

These and the many other new “high tech” mobility aids are constantly being developed and improved and will revolutionize travel for visually impaired persons. However, the two basic mobility aids that are still the most reliable and universally used are the white cane and the Dog guide.

THE WHITE CANE

The white cane is used by 35 percent of visually impaired Californians to achieve independent mobility in their homes and communities; but how well do most people understand its purpose and its functions? What images come to mind for most people when they think of a white cane?

For many, the white cane has negative connotations. It brings to mind images of helpless and pitiable persons, groping along the street. Even many blind and visually impaired persons subscribe to these images and refuse to carry the white cane so others will not know they are blind.

It is unfortunate that the white cane conjures up such pictures, because in actual fact, it is the tool which contributes the most to the independence and mobility of blind persons. It has liberated millions of blind people' worldwide from restricted lives of dependence and passivity. For these throngs of blind individuals, the white cane is more of a magic wand, a symbol of accomplishment and freedom.

How can a cane which appears to be little more than a stick provide so much assistance to its user? The white cane does much more than grope along the sidewalk alerting the blind pedestrian to obstacles in the path. The white cane provides a great deal of invaluable information about the surroundings. For example, the tapping sound echoes off the fronts of buildings as the cane user walks down the street. The sound changes as he or she passes openings such as doorways, driveways, and alleys. In large places, such as train station lobbies or airports, the echo lets the user know the size of the space and locations of hallways and stairwells.

The tip of the white cane is very sensitive, providing crucial information about ground surfaces. For example, the cane indicates when the concrete of the sidewalk changes into the asphalt of the street. This information is especially important in places where there are no curbs. Other surface changes can denote entrances to buildings, bus stops, and the front of the blind person's home or other destinations. In interior spaces, floor coverings are very informational. For example, in many hotel lobbies, department stores, and government buildings, tile or marble indicates walk ways, and carpeting indicates seating or merchandise areas or vice versa.

The cane picks up all these changes and many more, not to mention drop-offs like stairs or the edge of a platform in a train or subway station. Properly used, the white cane can give a blind person all the information needed to move about safely through most environments.

In summary, the white cane enables blind people to travel independently all over the world and to engage in the full gamut of vocational and leisure activities.

THE DOG GUIDE

The decision whether to use a cane or a dog can be a major one, which should not be made lightly. The relationship that can develop between humans and dogs can be of the most loving and powerful nature. The assistance that guide dogs provide can be tremendously useful, making a significant contribution to independent mobility. However, there are many factors to consider before making this choice.

Here are a few points to ponder:

- Dog training schools require visually impaired applicants to be good travelers. Thus, they must have already had training in Orientation and Mobility and have good travel skills. Dog guides do not actually take people to their destinations. The human partner must know how to get where he or she wants to go and give appropriate commands to the dog.

- Dogs like to walk rapidly. Their human companions must be in good physical condition and be able to maintain a brisk pace.
- Dogs are deeply caring and devoted. Their emotional well being depends on the love and attention of their human companions. The relationship that develops between a dog guide and a visually impaired person is usually very strong. This sometimes creates jealousy on the part of other family members. Likewise, dog guides expect to accompany their partners everywhere and become unhappy if left behind when their partners go out with other family members or friends.
- Dogs are a big responsibility. They need to be relieved every several hours no matter how inconvenient this may be for their human partners. The human partner is expected to pick up after the dog to repair or pay for any damage to the dog may cause. Dogs must be groomed daily and bathed regularly.
- Dogs are an added expense. Their food and grooming bills can be considerable, and while some training schools provide free veterinarian care, not all do. It may not be geographically feasible to use their services.
- Dogs can be social icebreakers. Most people love dogs and want to comment on how attractive and “wonderful” they are. However, it can be disconcerting to discover that the sighted public thinks that the humans are totally dependent on their dogs and that the dogs are taking care of them. Tact and diplomacy are often required in interacting with the public.

Think about these issues and how you would deal with them. A very good way to learn more about the experience of having and using a dog guide is to talk with people who do use them.

You can get referrals to such persons from any of the dog training schools listed below.

GUIDE DOGS FOR THE BLIND
P.O. BOX 151200
SAN RAFAEL, CA 94915-1200

(800) 295-4050
(415) 499-4000

GUIDE DOGS OF AMERICA
13445 GLENOAKS BOULEVARD
SYLMAR, CA 92263

(800) 459-4843
(818) 362-5834

GUIDE DOGS OF THE DESERT
P.O. BOX 1692
PALM SPINGS, CA 92263

(760) 329-6257

VIII. RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

SPORTS AND HOBBIES

As with every other aspect of life, visually impaired persons pursue the full range of recreational activities including individual and team sports, card and board games. They also are engaged in hobbies of all kinds, including sewing, knitting, crocheting, art, and music. The leisure time activities that persons with visual disabilities choose depends on their interests, abilities and stamina.

Remember that there is an alternative method of doing nearly everything. Visually impaired sports enthusiasts find many ingenious ways to compensate for their lack of vision. For example, blind cross-country skiers ski with a sighted guide who skis beside or behind them and gives them verbal clues about the environment. Blind golfers golf with a sighted partner who helps them keep track of their ball. Blind bowlers sometimes use a guide rail to keep their approach straight. Blind cyclists ride on tandem bicycles with a sighted "captain" riding on the front. Blind runners sometimes run touching hands with a partner or just follow verbal directions from a fellow runner.

Here are some of the activities that many blind and visually impaired persons are known to participate in:

Bicycling	Hiking
Canoeing	Kayaking
Dancing	Sailing
Diving	Skiing
Field and Track	Surfing
Golfing	Swimming
Hang Gliding	Wind Surfing

Braille and Large Print playing cards enable visually impaired persons to enjoy the social pleasures of card games such as bridge, poker, pinochle, and canasta. Braille and Large Print board games include Monopoly, Scrabble, Parcheesi, Clue, and many others.

Many blind persons have learned to sew, knit, crochet, and do macramé and other such activities through alternative methods. Braille and large print patterns are available for each of these crafts.

To find out about recreational opportunities in your community, contact the service agency for the visually impaired nearest you.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Some associations you might wish to contact are:

Access Abilities
P. O. Box 458,
Mill Valley, CA 94942
(415) 388-3250
Fax: (415) 383-8718

The Bay Area Association of Disabled Sailors
South Beach Yacht Harbor
P. O. Box 193730
San Francisco, CA 94119
(415) 281-0212

The Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program
830 Bancroft Way
Berkeley, CA 94710
(510) 849-4663
Fax: (510) 849-4616

Environmental Traveling Companions
Fort Mason Center
Building C, Room 360
San Francisco, CA 94123
(415) 474-7662

Inner City Outings
9608 Mira del Rio
Sacramento, CA 95827
(916) 362-5557

Operation Challenge and Tahoe Adaptive Ski School
Programs of Disabled Sports U.S.A.
P. O. Box 9780
Truckee, CA 96162
(530) 581-4161

Shasta Mountain Guides
1938 Hill Road
Mt. Shasta, CA 96067
(530) 926-3117

The United States Association of Blind Athletes
33 N. Institute Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
(719) 630-0422

United States Blind Golfers Association
3094 Shamrock Street N
Tallahassee, FL 32308
(850) 893-4511

TELEVISION AND MOVIES

Although blind and visually impaired persons have always enjoyed movies and television, the arrival of descriptive programming has made this pastime much more satisfying.

Descriptive Video Service (DVS) is a national service of the WGBH Educational Foundation in Boston. DVS provides narrated descriptions of a program or movie's key visual elements without interfering with the program's dialogue.

Several public television programs are available with DVS. These include The American Experience, Mobil Masterpiece Theater, Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood, Mystery, Nature, Nova, and Scientific American Frontier. The Turner Classic Movie channel broadcasts at least one movie per week with descriptive video. Also, many movies with descriptive video are available for purchase or on loan.

The DVS consists of short, informative verbal descriptions of action, costumes, sets, facial expressions, and body language, which are inserted between the dialog.

To receive DVS on television programs, you must have a television set equipped with a Separate Audio Program (SAP) channel sometimes called Audio B. When you tune to your SAP channel, you will hear the regular soundtrack of the show and the descriptions.

Descriptions of movies are placed on the main soundtrack of the videotape so no special equipment is required beyond a standard VideoCassette Recorder (VCR).

The DVS publishes a quarterly newsletter and program schedule in Braille, large print and on audiocassette. For more information about DVS, to receive the "DVS Guide" or to receive a catalog of described movies, telephone DVS at (800) 333-1203.

Movies can also be borrowed from the California Chapter of Library Users of America by contacting Peter Pardini at 267 Cardinal Road, Mill Valley, CA 94941. The telephone number is (415) 381-9211.

IX. ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

The explosion of new technology during the second half of this century has literally revolutionized life for persons with disabilities. Ranging from the simplest of "low tech" devices which respond to functional challenges, to the most sophisticated "high tech" solutions, technology is making it possible for people to transcend their disabilities and live independently, work competitively, and get much more enjoyment out of life.

ACCESS THROUGH ELECTRONICS

For individuals with visual impairments, the lack of access to the universe of information only available in print or other visual media has for centuries posed an enormous barrier both to independent living and to employment. Now, thanks to the emergence of the electronic age, access to printed information is greatly enhanced for blind and visually impaired persons.

- < **Computers** have neutralized some of the most disabling aspects of visual impairment by creating immediate access to the printed word. They have also opened up a vast new body of information by making the Internet available.
- < **Software** enlarges the print and images on computer monitors, so that low vision individuals can read their screens.
- < **Speech Synthesizers** produce speech output for totally blind persons.
- < **Translation Programs** produce Braille printouts of any material contained in a computer file.
- < **Reading Machines**, which are comprised of Optical Character Recognition (OCR) devices in tandem with conversion software, "read" printed books and other materials by scanning the print and producing the output in enlarged print, speech, or Braille.

Access to the printed word is therefore now immediate, compared to those not so long ago days when it took weeks or months to have materials transcribed into Braille or read onto tape.

THE CLOSED CIRCUIT TELEVISION

One of the most useful devices for persons with low vision is the Closed Circuit Television (CCTV). This machine will magnify print from any source, books, papers, and letters, etc., onto a TV screen. The user can adjust the size of the letters, ranging from just a little larger than normal to large enough to fill the screen with only one letter. The CCTV's are available from a number of sources. See the Vendors of Technology list in the Yellow Pages section of this *Handbook*.

FINDING OUT WHAT'S AVAILABLE

There are a staggering number and variety of electronic devices, which have been designed for blind and visually impaired persons. It can be difficult and confusing for individuals to select the right device for their own specific needs. A good way to look at all the options and experience hands-on demonstrations is to attend one of the conferences where there is a large exhibit area with a broad representation of exhibitors. Such conferences are held by the California Council of the Blind (CCB), the National Federation of the Blind of California (NFBC), and the Center on Technology And Persons With Disabilities at the California State University at Northridge (CSUN). The CCB and the NFBC hold two conferences per year, one in northern and one in southern California. The CSUN holds its annual conference in Los Angeles in March. Contact these organizations for details.

Most vendors of technology have statewide representation by marketing specialists. These representatives will come to your home and show you their equipment. This is a good way to learn what is available and what might be helpful to you. A list of these vendors is included in the Yellow Pages of this *Handbook*.

LOW TECH WORKS TOO

Although most people think in terms of computers when thinking of technology, assistive technology devices and services for persons with disabilities include an unlimited range of appliances and activities. Assistive Technology includes any tool, device, or apparatus, which enables a person with a disability to perform a function he or she cannot perform without it. Just about anything, no matter how simple, can be

considered *Assistive Technology*.

For visually impaired persons, there are hundreds of gadgets to help function independently around the house. They include large print clocks and timers, talking clocks, talking scales, large print and talking thermometers, measuring cups, spoons, and tapes with enlarged print and raised lines, needle threaders, sock sorters, knives with cutting guides, sensors that beep when liquid being poured reaches the top of the glass. There are beepers that sound off to help you find your keys, glasses, or purse and that is only the beginning.

Many people develop their own technology, such as the woman with the use of only one hand who discovered that if she put a nail in her cutting board, she could hold an onion or tomato in place while slicing it one-handed. Most visually impaired persons develop countless systems and devices for themselves to help with day-to-day activities.

MOBILITY AIDS

Technology is also developing to enhance mobility. For example, there are glasses that provide auditory information about the environment, hand held scanners that detect the location and intensity of light and Talking Signs[™], which indicate the location of features such as public telephones and bus stops.

A good way to find out about the assistive technology that may be helpful to you is to browse through catalogs. There are several catalogs that offer a general inventory of household aids, tools, magnification equipment, tape recorders, recreational materials, etc. A list of these catalogs is included in the Yellow Pages section of this *Handbook*. Each of the vendors on the Vendors of Technology list will provide you with a free catalog.

You may also wish to contact the AT Network for referrals to sources of assistive technology in your community. You can reach the At Network at (800) 390-2699.

X. ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

In addition to the service agencies described in Chapter III of this Handbook, there are other organizations and associations that may be of interest to you. Some sponsor research on specific eye diseases, some do research on a wide variety of topics related to visual impairment and publish informational books, pamphlets, and newsletters. Others are consumer organizations with chapters throughout the state whose members engage in various kinds of advocacy for individuals who are visually impaired.

CONSUMER ORGANIZATIONS

CALIFORNIA COUNCIL OF THE BLIND (CCB)

The CCB is comprised primarily of blind and partially sighted people from all walks of life and all parts of the state working together to ensure better opportunities and quality of life for people who are blind or visually impaired. The CCB states that its goal is "...to gain full independence, equality of opportunity, and acceptance for all blind people in California."

The CCB brochure states: "We believe that anything is possible and strive to make our lives very much like those of other people. For most of us, blindness is an inconvenience to be dealt with, not an impenetrable obstacle."

The CCB uses its resources to help blind people help themselves in three major ways:

1. Scholarship programs
2. Low Interest Equipment Loans that enable blind people to obtain special equipment

3. A toll-free number through which recently blinded persons and their families can obtain peer counseling, referrals to training facilities and government agencies, as well as advice to make the transition easier.

For more information call (800) 221-6359 or (510) 537-7877.

COMMITTEE ON THE SENIOR BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

This group is a resource for role models, peer counseling, support, information, and promotion of independence. The purpose is to assist and empower California senior citizens that are blind or visually impaired through education, advocacy, and encouragement. This committee offers a statewide network of resource representatives who can provide information, referrals, and peer counseling.

Call (800) 221-6359 to get the name and phone number of your nearest resource representative.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND (NFB)

Founded in 1940, the NFB has grown to include more than 10 percent of the nation's blind, more than fifty thousand members.

The Federation is organized in every state and has local chapters in almost every community of any size in the nation. Where there is no local chapter, there are members at large.

The purpose of the NFB is the complete integration of the blind into society on a basis of equality. This objective involves the removal of legal, economic, and social discriminations; the education of the public to new concepts concerning blindness; and the achievement by all blind people of the right to exercise to the fullest, their individual talents and capacities.

The NFB believes that the newly blinded person faces a difficult

adjustment. One of the best medicines is to meet other blind people and learn of their jobs and the techniques they use in doing things without sight. The NFB provides this common meeting ground and even more important, a sense of participation and restoration of confidence.

Members of the NFB contact newly blinded persons to help them with problems of adjustment and orientation. Information is also given concerning available services from governmental and private agencies, as well as facts about laws and regulations concerning the blind.

The NFB is the "voice of the blind, the blind speaking for themselves."

For more information, contact the National Federation of the Blind of California: Jim Willows, President, at (510) 846-6086.

RESEARCH ASSOCIATIONS

AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND (AFB)

The AFB is a national non-profit agency working in cooperation with over 700 agencies, organizations, and schools, offering services to blind and visually impaired people.

The mission of the AFB is to enable people who are blind and visually impaired to achieve equality of access and opportunity that will ensure freedom of choice in their lives. Since its founding in 1921, AFB has recognized its need to take a leadership roll in educating the general public as to the capabilities of people who are blind and visually impaired.

The AFB develops, collects, and disseminates information regarding the non-medical aspects of blindness. The organization has published hundreds of books, pamphlets, and magazines and has compiled a catalog of these materials.

For a list of these informational publications, contact the American

Foundation for the Blind, Communications Department,
11 Penn Plaza, Suite 300, New York, NY 10001. The phone numbers
are (212) 502-7600 or (800) 232-5473.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA SOCIETY TO PREVENT BLINDNESS

This organization publishes a great deal of informational material about eye diseases such as cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration and about the prevention of blindness. Their brochures are distributed free of charge. They also provide a home eye test for adults and children. Although the test does not take the place of a professional eye examination, it may help to detect a possible vision problem. Tests are available in English, Chinese, and Spanish.

One of their most comprehensive publications is "Coping with Sight Loss in Northern California," an excellent resource guide for newly visually impaired persons.

For a list of publications, contact the Northern California Society to Prevent Blindness, 4200 California Street, Suite 101, San Francisco, CA 94118 or by dialing (415) 387-0934 or (800) 338-3041

THE FOUNDATION FIGHTING BLINDNESS

The Foundation Fighting Blindness is a national eye research foundation dedicated to finding a cure for Retinitis Pigmentosa, Macular Degeneration, and related retinal degenerative diseases. The Foundation funds more research on these diseases than any other non-governmental agency in the world, supporting scores of basic and clinical research projects in the U.S. and Foreign countries. In addition, it serves as a worldwide source of information for affected families, specialists and professionals.

The Foundation has more than fifty affiliates in the United States. Annually, approximately 80 percent of the Foundation's budget is spent on program services, including research, public health and education, and human services.

For more information, contact:

The RP Foundation fighting Blindness National Headquarters
Executive Plaza I, Suite 800, 11350 McCormick Road
Hunt Valley, MD 21031-1014
Toll Free: (888) 394-3937
TDD: (800) 683-5551

GLAUCOMA RESEARCH FOUNDATION

From their web site:

Glaucoma is a leading cause of blindness. It has no warning, no symptoms, and left undetected, Glaucoma steals sight. But with proper care and treatment, Glaucoma can be controlled and vision retained.

At the Glaucoma Research Foundation, we see a future where sight and independence are not threatened by Glaucoma. Through research, public awareness, and patient education, we are looking to protect sight.

For more information, contact:

The Glaucoma Research Foundation
490 Post Street, Suite 830
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 986-3162
(800) 826-6693
(415) 986-3763 Fax

THE GLAUCOMA FOUNDATION

The Foundation is an international not for profit organization dedicated to fighting Glaucoma, the world=s leading preventable cause of blindness.

The Foundation's strategy is two-fold: raise public awareness

concerning the necessity of regular eye exams and fund critical research to find cures for Glaucoma.

For more information contact"

The Glaucoma Foundation
33 Maiden Lane
New York, NY 10038
(800) 452-8266

THE AMERICAN MACULAR DEGENERATION FOUNDATION

The American Macular Degeneration Foundation works for the prevention, treatment, and cure of macular Degeneration through raising funds, educating the public, and supporting scientific research.

For more information, contact:

The American Macular Degeneration Foundation
P.O. Box 515
Northampton, MA 01061-0515
(413) 733-2547

THE AMERICAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION

This association provides a wealth of information on all the various aspects of diabetes.

For more information, contact:

The American Diabetes Association
(800) 342-2383

DIRECTORY
OF
CALIFORNIA AGENCIES
FOR PERSONS
WHO ARE
VISUALLY IMPAIRED

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

AGENCIES SERVING PERSONS WHO ARE

VISUALLY IMPAIRED

AUBURN

Sierra Services for the Blind
Richard Crandall, Executive Director
1240 High Street, Suite 2
Auburn, CA 905603
(530) 889-2422

FRESNO

Friendship Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Phillip Kimble Executive Director
2032 Kern Mall
Fresno, CA 93721
(559) 266-9496
FAX (559) 266-6879

NEVADA CITY

Sierra Services for the Blind
Richard Crandall, Executive Director
546 Searls Avenue
Nevada City, CA 95959
(530) 265-2121
FAX (530) 265-2198

OAKLAND

**Lions Center for the Blind
Charles B. Boyer, Executive Director
3834 Opal Street
Oakland, CA 94609
(510) 450-1580
FAX (510) 654-3603**

PALO ALTO

**Peninsula Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Pam Brandin, Executive Director
2470 El Camino Real, Suite 107
Palo Alto, CA 94306
(650) 858-0202
FAX (650) 858-0857**

PITTSBURG

**Lions Blind Center of Diablo Valley
Peggy Nichols, Executive Director
175 Alvarado Avenue
Pittsburgh, CA 94565
(925) 432-3013
FAX (925) 432-7014**

SACRAMENTO

**Society for the Blind
Bryan Bashin, Executive Director
2750 24th Street
Sacramento, CA 95818
(916) 452-8271**

FAX (916) 452-2622

**Tri-Visual Services
Elena Negrete, Executive Director
1713 J Street, Suite 211
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 447-7323
FAX (916) 447-7324**

SAN FRANCISCO

**American Foundation for the Blind (AFB West)
Gil Johnson, Director
111 Pine Street, Suite 725
San Francisco, CA 94111
(415) 392-4845
FAX (415) 392-0383**

**Rose Resnick Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Anita Baldwin, Executive Director
214 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 431-1481
FAX (415) 863-7568**

**Blind Babies Foundation
Dennak Murphy, Executive Director
5016 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94112
(415) 586-6140
FAX (415) 586-6279**

SAN JOSE

**Lions Blind Center of the Santa Clara Valley
Ed Thomas, Executive Director
101 North Bascom Avenue**

**San Jose, CA 95128
(408) 295-4016
FAX (408) 298-1381**

SAN PABLO

**Living Skills Center for the Visually Handicapped
Patricia Williams, Executive Director
13830 San Pablo Avenue, Suite B
San Pablo, CA 94806
(510) 234-4984
FAX (510) 234-4986**

SAN RAFAEL

**Guide Dogs for the Blind, Inc.
Richard Bobb, CEO
P.O. Box 151200
San Rafael, CA 94915-1200
(415) 499-4000
FAX (415) 499-4035**

SANTA CRUZ

**Doran Resource Center for Blind and Visually Impaired
Sheila Vaughn, Executive Director
413 Laurel Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
(831) 458-9766
FAX (831) 458-9766**

STOCKTON

**Community Blind Center
Patrick Moore, Executive Director
130 West Flora Street**

**Stockton, Ca 95202
(209) 466-3836
FAX (209) 466-5692**

WINDSOR

**Redwood Lions Association Foundation
Carol Williams Price, Coordinator
815 Bond Place
Windsor, CA 95492
(707) 838-2574**

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

AGENCIES SERVING PERSONS WHO ARE

VISUALLY IMPAIRED

ANAHEIM

Braille Institute of America
Leslie Stocker, President
527 North Dale Avenue
Anaheim, CA 92801
(714) 821-5000
FAX (714) 527-7621

BAKERSFIELD

Eye Dog Foundation for the Blind
Lequita J. McKay, Executive Director
211 S. Montclair Street, Suite A
Bakersfield, CA 93309-3165
1-800-393-3641
(661) 831-1333
FAX (661) 831-0681

The Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Judy Ardray, Executive Director
1124 Baker Street
Bakersfield, CA 93305
(661) 322-5234
Fax: (661) 322-7754

LOS ANGELES

**Braille Institute of America
Leslie Stocker, President
741 North Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 663-1111
Fax: (213) 663-0867**

**Foundation for the Junior Blind
5300 Angeles Vista Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90043
(213) 295-4555
Fax: (213) 296-0424
Robert Ralls, President**

**Blind Childrens Center
4120 Marathon Street
Los Angeles, CA 90029
1-800-222-3567
(213) 664-2153
Fax: (213) 665-3828
Midge Horton, Executive Director**

MONTCLAIR

**White Cane Center for the Blind
5437 San Bernardino Street
Montclair, CA 91763
(909) 624-8988
Pat Dye, Executive Director**

PALM SPRINGS

**Desert Blind Association
800 Vella Road
P.O. Box 66
Palm Springs, CA 92263
(760) 323-4414
Elaine Clark, Director**

**Guide Dogs of the Desert
P.O. Box 1692
Palm Springs, CA 92263
(760) 329-6257
Fax: (760) 329-2127
James O. Hyatt, Executive Director**

RANCHO MIRAGE

**Braille Institute of America
70-251 Ramon Road
Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
(760) 321-1111
Fax: (760) 321-9715
Leslie Stocker, President**

RESEDA

**Therapeutic Living Centers
For the Blind
7955 Lindley Avenue
Reseda, CA 91335
(818) 708-1740
Fax: (818) 708-7899**

Lynn Robinson, Executive Director

RIVERSIDE

**Blindness Support Services, Inc.
2060 University Avenue, Suite 209A
Riverside, CA 92507
(909) 341-9244
Fax: (909) 684-0340
Peter Benavidez, Executive Director**

SAN BERNARDINO

**San Bernardino Valley Lighthouse
For the Blind
762 North Sierra Way
San Bernardino, CA 92410
(909) 884-3121
Fax: (909) 884-2964
Robert McBay, Executive Director**

SAN DIEGO

**Braille Institute of America
4510 Executive Drive, Suite 100
San Diego, CA 92121
(619) 452-1111
Fax: (619) 452-1688
Leslie Stocker, President**

**San Diego Center for the
Blind and Vision Impaired
5922 El Cajon Boulevard
San Diego, CA 92115**

(619) 583-1542

Fax: (619) 583-2335

Kimbrally Gibbens, Executive Director

SANTA ANA

**Blind Children's Learning Center
18542-B Vanderlip Avenue
Santa Ana, CA 92705
(714) 573-8888
Fax: (714) 573-4944
Gabrielle Hass, Executive Director**

SANTA BARBARA

**Braille Institute of America
2031 De La Vina Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93105
(805) 682-6222
Fax: (805) 569-2048
Leslie Stocker, President**

SANTA MONICA

**Center for the Partially Sighted
720 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 200
Santa Monica, CA 90401
(310) 458-3501
Fax: (310) 458-8179
La Donna Ringering, Executive Director**

SIERRA MADRE

**Center for Living Independence
For Multi-Handicapped Blind
(CLIMB)
161 West Sierra Madre Boulevard.
Sierra Madre, CA 91024
(818) 355-1447**

Fax: (818) 355-5558

William Young, Executive Director

SYLMAR

Guide Dogs of America

13445 Glenoaks Boulevard

Sylmar, CA 91342

(818) 362-5834

Fax: (818) 362-6870

John B. Pettitt, President

WHITTIER

Intercommunity Blind Center, Inc.

7702 South Washington Avenue

Whittier, CA 90602

(562) 945-8771

Fax: (562) 945-0051

Gerald R. Konsler, Executive Director

**DIRECTORY
OF
LOW VISION SERVICES
IN CALIFORNIA**

ABOUT LOW VISION SERVICES

Low vision clinics specialize in eye examinations and optical aids for people with visual limitations who cannot be helped with the usual corrective lenses. Light-enhancers, special glasses, magnifiers, closed circuit television, telescopes or other devices may be prescribed.

The purpose of these low vision optical aids is to allow persons with severely limited vision to be able to use remaining vision more efficiently; and expand and retain their independence in performing daily life activities.

After an optical aid has been prescribed, a vision care professional will give careful instructions on how to use it. Sometimes more than one optical aid will be prescribed. Before an optical aid is purchased, it is sometimes taken home and used on a trial basis.

The eye examination and the low vision optical aids may be paid for by MEDICARE, MEDI-CAL, and/or the CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION. Sometimes a Lions Club or other service organization will help with costs if there is no other funding source.

Some clinics or doctor's offices will handle the paper work and fill-out the forms required by the funding sources. Always ask for this help.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

LOW VISION SERVICES

BERKELEY

**Low Vision Center
School of Optometry
University of California
200 Minor Hall
Berkeley, CA 94720
(510) 642-5726**

CHICO

**Douglas R. Myers, O.D.
500 Cohasset Road, Suite 24
Chico, CA 95926
(530) 891-1146**

CITRUS HEIGHTS

**Palmer N. Lee, O.D.
5959 Greenback Lane, Suite 130
Citrus Heights, CA 95621
(916) 969-4141**

DUBLIN

**Mark McAdams, O.D.
7189 Amador Plaza Road
Dublin, CA 94568
(510) 828-9511**

EUREKA

Zuzana Gellner, O.D
Eureka Optometric Center
2820 Harris Street
Eureka, CA 95501
(707) 442-1472

Angus B. Stewart, M.D.
Gregory N. Gibb, M.D.
John S. Mastroni, M.D.
Steven Frugart, C.O.T. (Certified Optometric
Technician)
2840 O-Neil Lane
Eureka, CA 95503
(707) 443-9777

FARMERSVILLE

Dennis Wallace, O.D..
684 East Visalia Road
Farmersville, CA 93223
(209) 747-3461

FORTUNA

Alan French, O.D.
Fortuna Optometry
630 - 9th Street
Fortuna, CA 95540
(707) 725-5144

FRESNO

**California Eye Institute
Low Vision Department
St. Agnes Hospital
1360 East Herndon
Fresno, CA 93720
(209) 449-5000**

**Vision Care Center of Central California
1045 AS@ Street
Fresno, CA 93721
(209) 486-2000**

GRASS VALLEY

**Kevin Woodburn, O.D.
10058 Joerschke Drive
Grass Valley, CA 95945
(916) 273-5583**

NAPA

**Service In Sight
Daniel C. Schaimholz, M.D.
3443 Villa Lane, Suite 5
Napa, CA 94558
(707) 255-2733**

PALO ALTO

**Peninsula Center for the Blind and
Visually Impaired
2470 El Camino Real, Suite 107
Palo Alto, CA 94306
(415) 858-0202**

**Western Blind Rehabilitation Center
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
V.A. Palo Alto Health Care System
3801 Miranda
Palo Alto, CA 94304
(415) 493-5000**

PARADISE

**Don K. Hardt, O.D.
6283 Clark Road, Suite 10
Paradise, CA 95969
(916) 877-2020**

REDDING

**David L. Dennis, O.D.
405 South Street, Suite F
Redding, CA 96001
(916) 244-2140**

**Northern California Vision Resource Center
1405 Court Street
Redding, CA 96001
(916) 222-2256**

SACRAMENTO

**Don P. Fong, O.D.
3956 J Street, Suite #4
Sacramento, CA 95819
(916) 739-6260**

**Low Vision Clinic
Visual Services Center
Sacramento Society for the Blind
2750 - 24th Street
Sacramento, CA
(916) 452-8271**

**University of California at Davis
Low Vision Service
Department of Ophthalmology
1611 Alhambra Boulevard
Sacramento, CA 95816
(916) 734-6603**

SAN FRANCISCO

**Beckman Vision Center
University of California, San Francisco
400 Parnassus Avenue, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94143
(415) 476-5022**

**Low Vision Services
California Pacific Medical Center
2340 Clay Street, 5th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94115
(415) 923-3933**

**Low Vision Center
Rose Resnick Lighthouse for the Blind
Daniel C. Schaimholz, M.D.
214 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 431-1481**

SAN JOSE

**Curt Keswick, O.D.
6531 Crown Boulevard
San Jose, CA 95120
(408) 997-2020**

SAN RAFAEL

**Marin Low Vision Clinic
Howard Levenson, O.D.
930 Tamalpais Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901
(415) 457-8890**

SANTA CRUZ

**Doran Low Vision Clinic
Doran Resource Center for the Blind
413 Laurel Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060**

(408) 458-9766

SANTA ROSA

**Janet Caddell, O.D.
208 E Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
(707) 546-3836**

UKIAH

**Marilyn K. Gilbreath, O.D.
102 Scott Street
Ukiah, CA 95482
(707) 462-7040**

VISALIA

**Richard Steiner, O.D.
101 East Noble Avenue
Visalia, CA 93277
(209) 733-4372**

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

LOW VISION SERVICES

BAKERSFIELD

**Ronald Kosh, O.D.
2525 Eye Street
Bakersfield, CA 93301-2055
(805) 327-8511**

**Thurman Edward Wood, O.D.
5251 Office Park Drive, Suite 101
Bakersfield, CA 93309
(805) 325-7738**

BRAWLEY

**Donald Barniske, O.D.
260 Main Street
P.O. Box 1071
Brawley, CA 92227-2351
(619) 351-2020**

**David Gayle, O.D.
260 Main Street
P.O. Box 1071
Brawley, CA 92227-2351
(619) 351-2020**

BURBANK

**Wayne Hoeft, O.D.
Burbank Family Optometry
907 N. San Fernando Boulevard
Burbank, CA 91504
(818) 846-9075**

CHULA VISTA

**Robert Evans, O.D.
330 Oxford Street, Suite 206
Chula Vista, CA 91911
(619) 422-5361**

EL CAJON

**Marilyn Carter, O.D.
510 South Magnolia
El Cajon, CA 92020
(619) 444-9012**

ENCINO

**Robert L. Gordon, O.D.
16255 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 705
Encino, CA 91436-2385
(818) 986-8860**

**Farnaz Khankhanian, O.D.
16255 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 705
Encino, CA 91436-2385
(818) 990-6133**

FULLERTON

**Low Vision Rehabilitation
Optometric Center of Fullerton
Southern California College of Optometry
2575 Yorba Linda Boulevard
Fullerton, Ca 92631
(714) 449-7400**

HESPERIA

**Bennett McAllister
15888 Main Street, Suite 112A
Hesperia, CA 92345-3467
(619) 949-2242**

HUNTINGTON BEACH

**Douglas R. Williams, O.D.
Warner Dale Square
6042 Warner Avenue
Huntington Beach, CA 92647
(714) 847-6059**

LA JOLLA

**Partial Vision Center
Scripps Memorial Hospital
9888 Genesee Avenue
La Jolla, CA 92037
(619) 626-6571**

LA MESA

**Thomas M. Hixson, O.D.
La Mesa Vision Care
8007 La Mesa Boulevard
La Mesa, CA 91941
(619) 466-5665**

LANCASTER

**David Matherly, O.D.
1115 West Avenue K
Lancaster, CA 93534
(805) 945-3033**

LOMA LINDA

**Department of Ophthalmology
Loma Linda University Medical Center
11370 Anderson Street, Suite 1800
Loma Linda, CA 92354
(909) 799-8400**

LOMPOC

**Daniel R. Taketa, O.D.
611 East Ocean Avenue
Lompoc, CA 93436
(805) 736-7010**

LONG BEACH

**Low Vision Center
St. Mary Medical Center
1055 Linden Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90813
(310) 491-9275**

LOS ANGELES

**Elise Brisco, O.D.
Hollywood Vision Center
927 N. La Cienega Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90069
(310) 854-0900**

**Ricardo Espinosa, O.D.
4545 East 3rd Street, Suite 105
Los Angeles, CA 90022
(213) 261-3098**

**Michael Kahwaji, O.D.
2771 Rowena Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90039
(213) 664-1996**

**Lynn W. Kurata, O.D.
420 East 3rd Street, Suite 603
Los Angeles, CA 90013
(213) 680-1551**

**Low Vision Clinic
Jules Stein Eye Institute
Department of Ophthalmology
University of California at Los Angeles
100 Stein Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90024
(310) 825-5000**

MONTEBELLO

**Elizabeth Camara, O.D.
114 North Garfield Avenue
Montebello, CA 90640
(213) 722-1816**

ORANGE

**Pamela V. Falk, O.D.
1122 East Lincoln Avenue, Suite 204
Orange, CA 92865
(714) 279-1370**

**Low Vision Clinic (Scheduled to open approx. 1/1/98)
University of California at Irvine (UCI) Medical Center
101 City Drive South
Orange, CA 92868
(714) 456-7183**

OXNARD

**Andrea Moore, O.D.
A Street Optical
363 South A Street
Oxnard, CA 93030
(805) 483-6619**

**Bernard K. Rubin, O.D.
A Street Optical
363 South A Street
Oxnard, CA 93030**

(805) 484-6619

RANCHO SANTA FE

**Elizabeth Christensen, O.D.
Rancho Pharmacy Building
P.O. Box 275
Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067
(619) 756-3210**

RIALTO

**Richard J. Shuldiner, O.D.
1610 S. Riverside Avenue
Rialto, CA 92376
(909) 421-2020**

SAN BERNARDINO

**Sandra M. Akamine, O.D.
399 E. Highland Avenue, Suite 201
San Bernardino, CA 92404
(909) 881-2428**

SAN LUIS OBISPO

**Robert Cheung, O.D.
764 Santa Rosa
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401**

(805) 543-1447

SAN MARCOS

**Richard Skay, O.D.
1145 San Marino Drive, Suite 111
San Marcos, CA 92065
(619) 744-2211**

SANTA BARBARA

**Joe Dobbs, O.D.
1805 State Street, Suite B
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 569-1504**

SANTA MONICA

**Center for the Partially Sighted
720 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite #200
Santa Monica, CA 90401
(310) 458-3501**

SOUTH PASADENA

**Shelly R. Holcomb-Lowe, O.D.
South Pasadena Optometric Group, Inc.
729 Mission Street, Suite 200**

**South Pasadena, CA 91030
(818) 441-5300**

TORRANCE

**Gary Asano, O.D.
3537 Torrance Boulevard, Suite 18
Torrance, CA 90503-4818
(310) 540-7500**

VENTURA

**Richard Hatcher, O.D.
4080 Loma Vista Road, Suite F
Ventura, CA 93003-1811
(805) 642-2574**

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION

DA = District Administrator
RS = Rehabilitation Supervisor
CT = Counselor Teacher
RCB = Rehabilitation Counselor for the Blind
RC* = Designated Rehabilitation Counselor

FIELD STAFF - NORTHERN REGION

CHICO DISTRICT/120
470 Rio Lindo, Suite 4
Chico, CA 95926-9983
(530) 895-5507
FAX: (530) 895-4012

DA Don Reaksecker
RS Craig Cooper
RCB Katherine Oldham
CT Deborah McGarr

Grass Valley Branch/06
970 E. Main Street, Suite 100
Grass Valley, CA 95945-9937
(530) 273-9529
FAX: (530) 273-1519

RS Bill Hendricks
CT Vicki MacDonald

OAKLAND DISTRICT/220
1515 Clay Street, Suite 119
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 622-2764
FAX: (510) 622-2797

DA Henry Leng
RS Brian Salem
RCB (Vacant)

Edgewater Branch
7700 Edgewater Drive, Suite 120
Oakland, CA 94621

RS Ray Nishimura
RCB Sonia Peterson

DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION

**Berkeley Branch/03
1936 University Ave. Suite. 150
Berkeley, CA 94704
(510) 883-6000
FAX: (510) 704-8221**

**RS Jim Armstrong
RCB Patricia Leetz
CT Gary Bragg**

**Fremont Branch/01
39155 Liberty Street, Suite 251
Fremont, CA 94538-1514
(510) 794-2458
FAX: (510) 794-2456
TDD: (510) 797-2493**

**RS Ray Nishimura
CT Frank Blais**

**California School for the Blind
500 Walnut Avenue
Fremont, CA 94536
(510) 794-3800
FAX: (510) 794-3813**

**RCB Tony Lewis:
Also works out of
Hayward Branch Office
(510) 782-8105.**

**PLEASANT HILL DISTRICT/210
2285 Morrello Avenue
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523-1896
(925) 602-3953
FAX: (925) 689-1797**

**DA Kathi Mowers-Moore
RS Scott Hanson
CT Mark Pighin
RCB Gonzalo Manzo**

**Richmond Branch/02
12810 San Pablo Avenue
Richmond, CA 94805-1356
(510) 232-7062
FAX: (510) 231-8727**

**RS John Hollander
RCB Barbara Calava-
Messinger**

**Vallejo Branch/04
480 Redwood Street, Suite., 40
Vallejo, CA 94590
(707) 648-4010
FAX: (707) 648-4038**

**RS Peter Harsch
RCB Patrick Duffey
CT Maeve Metzger**

DEPARTMENT OF REHABILITATION

**Stockton Branch/05
4555 Precissi Lane, Suite 1
Stockton, CA 95207-6273
(209) 948-7700
FAX: (209) 957-1425**

**RS Ric Huntley
RCB Loretta Lee
CT Charlene Furnas**

**SACRAMENTO DISTRICT/00
2225 - 19th Street
Sacramento, CA 95841
(916) 324-3200
FAX: (916) 322-0922**

DA Brenda Brent

**Northeast Branch/02
5777 Madison Ave., Suite 1050
Sacramento, CA 95841-3377
(916) 537-2640
FAX: (916) 537-2658**

**RS Jay Onasch
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(800) 232-3044
FAX: (212) 502-7774

The Journal is *THE* international interdisciplinary journal on blindness and visual impairment "and serves as a forum for the exchange of ideas, airing of controversies, and discussion of issues." It comes in two parts. One consists of peer-reviewed research articles geared to a professional audience, such as educators, medical personnel, social workers and psychologists. Part Two" is smaller (about 32 pages) and is subtitled JVIB News Service. Information Updates make good reading. The helpful Product Evaluation section is written in a reader-friendly Consumer Reports style by staff of the AFB Technology Center. Individual subscriptions to the entire Journal are \$84/year. Comes in four media: print, Braille, cassette, and disk.

< THE LANTERN

Rose Resnick Lighthouse
214 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 431-1481

Published every-other month. Primarily covers Lighthouse activities in the Greater San Francisco Bay Area; some coverage of California Council of the Blind services. Classified ads are good source of used equipment. Comes in large print, cassette, Braille and disk. Free!

< THE NIGHT LIGHTER

RP International
P.O. Box 900
Woodland Hills, CA 91365
(800) 344-4877 or (FIGHT RP)

Mainly tracks activities of RP International but also includes information on new RP research, and educational and social programs in Southern California. Not a scheduled publication but usually semi-annual. Free. Available in large print, cassette and, where available, Cable Radio Network.

< OFFICE OF SCIENTIFIC REPORTING

National Eye Institute
2020 Vision Place
Bethesda, MD 20892-3655
(301) 496-5248

This Institute, part of the Federal Government's National Institutes of Health, conducts and supports research on eye disease and the visual system. They can send you a list of free brochures on eye disorders.

< REACHING PEOPLE

California Retinitis Pigmentosa Support Group
21 Colorados Drive
Millbrae, CA 94030
(650)-345-7970

“RP” here means Reaching People.” And the upbeat purpose of this small 3-page newsletter, which is published every-other month, is to connect people with RP with one another. Experiences with vision loss are shared in a motivational and inspirational way. There is some emphasis on Bay Area events but geography is unimportant because there are subscribers even in Alaska. Free! Published in large print. Cassette or disk available upon request.

< SIGHTLINES

Center for the Partially Sighted
720 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 200
Santa Monica, CA 90401
(310) 458-3501

Sharing of information about agency's programs but not limited to this. Also includes news about activities conducted throughout the nation, such as vision exercise programs. Contents are creative and focus on how to live more independently and adaptively, like how to organize your closet. Publication is sporadic, depending on budget. Free! Large print.

< SHARING SOLUTIONS

Newsletter for Support Groups
The Lighthouse Inc
111 East 59th Street
New York, N.Y. 10022-1202
(800) 829-0500

A twice-a-year, no-charge publication covering just what the title says. That is, a sharing of experiences other people with vision loss have had in coping with the daily problems faced by us all. Large print and cassette formats. If requested, the newsletter can be sent in Braille.

< TACTIC

Clovernook Center
7000 Hamilton Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45231-5297
(513) 522-3860/(513) 321-2232

This impressive quarterly provides information on access technology for blind and visually impaired users. The magazine touts itself as unique in scope and perspective--covering products, by all manufacturers, which provide Braille, synthesized speech, or enlarged print access to information. Products are objectively analyzed and evaluated without any product preference." Contains reviews of hardware, software, and telecommunications products, books, and technical developments of interest to visually impaired computer users, as well as a "Feedback" column from readers. *Tactic* is literate, articulate, well written and informative. Available in Braille, large-print and disk. One-year subscription is \$25.

< VOICE OF THE DIABETIC

The National Federation of the Blind
811 Cherry Street, Suite 309
Columbia, MO 65201
(573) 875-8911

Personal stories and practical guidance by blind diabetics and medical professionals; medical news, resource column, and a recipe corner. Print and cassette formats. Free!

DIRECTORY
OF
CATALOGS OF MERCHANDISE
DESIGNED FOR PERSONS
WHO ARE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

**AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE
FOR THE BLIND**

1839 Frankfort Avenue
P.O. Box 6085
Louisville, KY 40206-0085

Main Number (502) 899-2405
Information: (800) 223-1839
Orders: (800) 223-1839
Fax: (502) 899-2274

For nearly 150 years, the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) has been creating unique products for people who are visually impaired. This catalog is a general store of aids, tools and supplies. In it you will find everything from an abacus to baseball games to shoelace aids. Aside from slates and styluses and similar traditional items, the product line includes high-tech items such as talking computer software. APH products are primarily designed for students, but many are also useful for adults, both in education and in daily living.

ANN MORRIS ENTERPRISES

551 Hosner Mountain Road
Stormville, NY 12582

Information: (845) 227-9659
Orders: (800) 454-3175
Fax: (845) 226-2793

This catalog is crammed with “fun” items and lives up to its billing of being full of innovative products for people with vision loss. It contains audible accessories, which range from talking blood pressure monitors and thermometers to a ceramic milk pitcher in the shape of a Holstein cow, which moos when picked up. There are more mundane items such as wallet organizers, white canes and pet supplies. But the fun comes from products like the tactile weather thermometer, bread slicing guide and the no-spill ice tray. And who can resist the harness sign for your dog, which reads “Please ignore me, I’m on duty”?

BEYOND SIGHT, INC.
26 East Arapahoe Road
Littleton, CO 80122

Information and
Orders: (303) 795-6455
Fax: (303) 795-6425

The goal of this upscale catalog is "to enhance the independence of blind and reading impaired people through quality products and services." Products advertised in the glossy catalog set the tone of quality; and the money-back policy, equipment-training seminars, and hands-on product evaluations indicate a concern for quality service. The type of products is similar to those of other vendors—CCTV's and other magnification readers, computers, Braille displays and printers, games and gifts, home and health items, kitchen aids and canes. There are stylish talking watches and clocks--the whistle activated talking alarm clock is especially nifty. All in all you get the feeling that someone at Beyond Sight took a lot of pains to select only the best for this catalog.

BLAZIE ENGINEERING
105 E. Jarrettsville Road
Forest Hill, MD 21050
(410) 893-9333
FAX (410) 836-5040

This company provides a wide variety of Braille 'n Speak machines, specialized software, Braille graphics software, Windows screen readers, speech synthesizers, Braille translators, and accessories.

**CAROLYN'S
LOW VISION PRODUCTS**
1415 - 57th Avenue West
Bradenton, FL 34207

Information and
Orders: (800) 648-2266
Fax: (941) 739-5503

"Enhanced Living Products" is the aptly named subtitle of this catalog that has the most attractive cover you're likely to come across. And the products advertised inside live up to this billing. What a gallery of merchandise you'll discover--a talking diary, a spacious selection of magnifiers and a horde of "affordable CCTV's." To put it in a nutshell, *Carolyn's* carries helpful products for people of all ages to use to read, write, enjoy their hobbies, and maintain independence. In this catalog you'll find just about anything you'll ever want or need.

DVS HOME VIDEO CATALOGUE Information: (800) 333-1203
125 Western Avenue Orders: (800) 736-3099
Boston, MA 02134 Fax: (800) 782-5756

Descriptive Video Service, or DVS, makes television broadcast programs and movies on video accessible to blind and visually impaired people. It does this magic by weaving carefully crafted descriptions of the key elements of a movie--the action, characters, locations, costumes and sets--into the natural pauses of the program or movie dialogue. You get to follow all the action because there is no interference with the movie's dialogue or sound effects. To watch movies and hear the descriptions, you only need a standard TV and VCR. No special feature or device is needed. More than 145 movies are available for sale from DVS, generally from \$15 to \$30. But DVS home videos are now available in many Blockbuster stores. And those can be rented.

ENABLING TECHNOLOGIES COMPANY

3102 SE Jay Street
Stuart, FL 34997
1-800-777-3687
(561) 692-1003
FAX (561) 220-2920

This company provides a variety of Braille printers.

ESCHENBACH OPTIK OF AMERICA

904 Ethan Allen Highway
Ridgefield, CT 06877
(203) 438-7471
FAX (203) 438 1670

Low Vision optical enhancement devices.

INDEPENDENT LIVING AIDS, INC.

27 East Mall
Plainview, NY 11803

Information: (800) 537-2118

Orders: (800) 537-2118

Fax: (516) 752-3135

This catalog pretty well lives up to its slogan of "Can-Do Products for Your Active Independent Life." It will remind you of a small version of a big Sear's wish-book, because the product line runs from big hand unisex watches and talking watches to games and hobbies, including a wonderful Brailled Monopoly imported from England. You'll like it because Boardwalk and Park Place become Mayfair and Park Lane. ILA carries one of the largest selections of lighting aids and magnifiers you're likely to find. There's also an impressive assortment of kitchen gadgets and gizmos and a lot of household and health aids.

INFOGRIP

1141 East Main Street
Ventura, CA 93001
1-800-397-0921
(805) 652-0880

This company provides computer accessories, such as: Keyboard Options, Pointing Options, Switch Options, Educational Options, mount and Desk Options, Vision Options, and Ergonomic Options.

THE LIGHTHOUSE ENTERPRISES

36-20 Northern Boulevard

Information: (800) 334-5497

Orders: (800) 829-0500

Long Island City, NY 11101

Fax: (718) 786-5620

Lighthouse Enterprises carries many items that, like the catalog says, "speak for themselves." These are talking clocks, watches, scales and calculators. Among the non-speaking items, you'll find some dynamite folding canes and magnifiers, and a good variety of household and personal items, health necessities and leisure products. This is a good source of unusual items featuring large print, Braille, or high contrasting colors which make it easy for someone with impaired vision to use. This catalog is a great source for gifts--whether you're on the giving or receiving end.

L.S. & S GROUP

P.O. Box 673

Northbrook, IL 60065

Information: (708) 498-9777

Orders: (800) 468-4789

Fax: (708) 498-1482

LS & S puts out a no-nonsense catalog that has one of the widest assortments of merchandise specifically for the visually impaired that you're likely to find. For an idea of the product range offered, you will find 82 pages that are jam-packed with hundreds of items ranging from grab bars and software to a Speedo water radio and an automatic potato peeler. It belongs in your collection of "wish lists."

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR VISUALLY HANDICAPPED (NAVH)

Visual Aids and Information Material

222 West 21st Street - 6th Floor

Information: (212) 889-3141

To Order: (212) 889-3141

New York, NY 10010

Fax: (212) 727-2931

or

3201 Balboa Street
San Francisco, CA 94121

Information: (415) 221-3201
To Order: (415) 221-3201
Fax: (415) 221-8754

What a knock-out resource this is for anyone with low vision! Just imagine a shop full of Magnifiers with all sorts of strengths, styles and shapes. Some are for the left-handed; some are for the right-handed. Some fold into little cases, others slip into svelte little pockets. Some are hand-held. Others, like a particularly dazzling little number that comes in gold or silver, dangle from your neck as a stunning chain necklace. There are writing aids galore, some truly awesome gigantic playing cards; and "Big Eyes Magic Focus Mirrors" that magnify approximately 5X. And that's not all. NAVH has a great listing of what it calls "sophisticated visual aids"; plus a place to order large print checks and large print music scores and books, and lots of other great stuff. There's only a slight fly in the ointment. If you're not a member of NAVH, you'll pay a little bit more. So it might be worthwhile to explore membership.

SCIENCE PRODUCTS

Box 888
Southeastern, PA 19399

Information: (215) 296-2111
Orders: (800) 888-7400
Fax: (215) 296-0488

This compact little catalog carries a big impact. Science Products declares that it "offers the largest assortment of diversified products, tools, instruments and materials for the vision impaired in the United States." If you need low vision help, this is an excellent resource to obtain aids and materials for vision enhancement for home, office, indoor and outdoor leisure and recreation, hobby and school.

THE STORE

Massachusetts Association
- for the Blind

Information and
Orders: (617) 972-9114
Main: (617) 926-4232

23 A Elm Street
Watertown, MA 02472

Talking tape players, embossed line stationery, and "Free Matter for the Blind" postage franking stamps are only some of the goodies you'll find here. The Massachusetts Association for the Blind, or MAB as it is called, has compiled a nice assortment of practical products for blind and partially sighted people. Some are technically innovative. Like Light Probes so blind persons will know whether lights are on in a room; and the "Say When" sensor device that tells you when your cup or glass is full. Some are just pure fun. Like the Tic-Tac-Toe set. It comes in an oversized version of the classic game; and the wooden pieces are distinguishable by touch and color. All catalog prices, by the way, are buyer-friendly. Catalog is available in large print, Braille, cassette or disk.

**DIRECTORY OF
VENDORS OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY
FOR PERSONS WHO ARE
VISUALLY IMPAIRED**

ACCESS 2020

1-800-563-0668

FAX (613) 224-3480

Email: markj@access2020.com

Home of the Internet Braille Wizard. They produce Braille publications, labels and business cards using the latest in computerized embossing technology.

ACCESS FIRST

Suite 101

263 Russell Hill Road

Toronto, ON Canada M4V 2T4

Provides sales, training and support for the sight impaired, print handicapped and learning disabled community.

ACCESSABILITY, INC.

320 Clement Street

San Francisco, CA 94118

1-888-322-7200

FAX (415) 751-5262

This company provides: scanning systems, notetaking systems, training, embossers, sound cards and speech synthesizers, stand alone scanner systems, CCTV and computer magnification options and accessories, refreshable Braille and Braille notetaking systems, speech/Braille software, and talking products.

ACKLEY APPLIANCE SERVICE

4301 Park Avenue #540

Des Moines, IA 50321

(515) 288-3931

This company provides complete Perkins Brailier repair. The site also includes a history of the Brailier.

ACRONTECH INTERNATIONAL, INC.

The Williamsville Executive Center

5500 Main Street

Williamsville, NY 14221

1-800-245-2020

(716) 854-3814

FAX (716) 854-4014

Manufacturer of Innovative Solutions and vendor of the Personal Organizer Software with calendar, checking, address book, calculator and more.

ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY CONSULTING, INC.

P.O. Box 778

Amesbury, MA 01913

(978) 462-3817

A company that provides, installs and trains in the use of equipment for the blind, visually impaired and individuals with reading difficulties.

ADVANCE ACCESS DEVICES

2066-C Walsh Avenue

Santa Clara, CA 95050

(408) 970-9760

FAX (408) 727-9351

This company provides a Braille and Speech Access device in a lightweight, laptop computer.

AI SQUARED

P.O. Box 669
Manchester Center, VT 05255
(802) 362-3612

The most advanced screen magnifier on the market today!
ZoomText Xtra Level 1 delivers unparalleled features and
performance.

ALVA ACCESS GROUP INC.

436 14th Street, Suite 700
Oakland, CA 94612-2709
(510) 451-2582
FAX: (510) 451-0878
Email: aangermann@aagi.com

Product Description: OutSPOKEN screen readers for Windows and
Macintosh, and in LARGE screen magnification for Macintosh.

ARKENSTONE, a Division of Freedom Scientific

11800 31st Court North
St. Petersburg, FL 33716-1805
1-800-444-4443
Tech Support (727) 803-8600
FAX: (727) 803-8001
<http://www.freedomscientific.com>

Product Description: Arkenstone provides adaptive technology for
people with visual or reading disabilities including, reading machines
and software, talking maps and personal orientation systems.

ARCTIC TECHNOLOGIES INTERNATIONAL

1000 John R. Road, Suite 108
Troy, MI 48083
(248) 588-7370
FAX: (248) 588-2650
Email: sales@arctictech.com

Product Description: Speech Synthesis, Screen Access (DOS, Windows 3, Windows 95) Screen Enlargement, Notetakers, and much more for low vision and blind individuals.

AUTOMATED FUNCTIONS INC.

7700 Leesburg Pike
Suite 420
Falls Church, VA 22043
(703) 883-9797
FAX: (703) 883-9798
Email: autofunc@tmn.com

Product Description: Automated Functions designs and develops products to assist visually impaired computer users. Windows City three-dimensional windows screen reader; Smartalk 5 oz speech synthesizer.

BARTIMAEUS GROUP

1481 Chain Bridge Road, Suite 100
McLean, VA 22101
(703) 442-5023
FAX (703) 723-8381

Provides access solutions for people who are Blind/Visually Impaired. They also provide on-site adaptive technology training and support along with a wide variety of products.

BLAZIE, a Division of Freedom Scientific

2850 SE market Place, Unit #3

Stuart, FL 33716

1-800-444-444300

FAX: (727) 803-8001

Email: www.freedomscientific.com

Product Description: Makers of Braille-n-Speak, Type-n- Speak and Braille Lite notetaker/personal digital assistants for people who are blind and visually impaired.

BRILLE JYMICO

110, 51st Street East

Charlesbourg, Que, CAN G1H2J9

(418) 624-2105

FAX (418) 624-0994

Production of graphics using raised contours and musical texts in Braille.

DOLPHIN COMPUTER ACCESS

100 South Ellsworth Avenue, 4th Floor

San Mateo, CA 94401

(650) 348-7401

FAX (650) 348-7403

Contact the company for LowVision magnifiers and speech synthesizers.

DUXBURY SYSTEMS, INC.

270 Littleton Road, Unit 6
Westford, MA 01886-3523
(978) 692-3000
FAX (978) 692-7912
Email: info@duxsys.com

This company provides a Braille translator system that works with your computer.

ENABLING TECHNOLOGIES COMPANY

1601 Northeast Braille Place
Jensen Beach, FL 34957
1-800-777-3687
FAX 1-800-950-3687

The world's leading manufacturer of Braille embossers.

ETEX MEXICO

Estela V. Landeros Santiago
432-1 Col. San Jeronimo
Mexico, D.F. 10200
(525) 595-9956
FAX (525) 595-9959

A Mexican company specializing in screen readers speech synthesizers in Spanish for the blind.

GW MICRO, INC.

725 Airport North Office Park
Fort Wayne, IN 46825
(219) 489-3671
FAX: (219) 489-2608
Email: support@gwmicro.com

Product Description: Computer hardware and software for the blind, visually impaired, and learning disabled people.

HENTER-JOYCE, a Division of Freedom Scientific

11800 - 31st Court North
St. Petersburg, FL 33716-1805
1-800-444-4443
FAX: (727) 803-8001
Email: info@hj.com

Product Description: Henter-Joyce is the developer of JAWS (Job Access With Speech) for DOS, Windows 3.1, Windows 3.11 and Windows 95. JAWS Screen Reader, MAGic Screen Magnifier, Open Book Scanning & Reading Software, VERA Scanning & Reading Appliance, Training & Tutorials for JAWS for Windows.

HUMANWARE

6245 King Road
Loomis, CA 95650
1-800-722-3393
(916) 652-7253
FAX: (916) 652-7296

Product Description: HumanWare, Inc. provides adaptive technology for persons who are visually impaired or learning disabled.

INDEX BRAILLE

Box 155
S-95423 Gammelstad, Sweden
+46-920 203080
FAX +46-920 203085
Email: info@indexbraille.com

This company provides Braille embossers, speech assisted user interface, portable and fast double-embosser, embosser for newspaper format, Windows drivers for Braille, scanning software for Braille, and WinBraille braille editor.

INNOVENTIONS, INC.

5921 s. Middlefield Road, Suite 102
Littleton, CO 80123
1-800-854-6554
FAX (303) 727-4940

Source of the Magni-Cam. The portable, affordable electronic magnifier for people with low vision.

JBLISS IMAGING SYSTEMS

1975 Hamilton Avenue, Suite 6A
San Jose, CA 95125
(408) 369-7000
FAX: (408) 369-7612
Email: jbliss@aol.com

Product Description: Software products that enable people who are blind or have low vision to read documents from printed material, Internet or compact disk. Products are highly configurable, or customized, to individual need for variation in font size; and letter movement, speed or spacing.

JENSEN ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY

1671 Elk Boulevard
Des Plaines, IL 60016
(847) 803-0044
FAX (847) 803-6019

Adaptive/assistive technology solutions provider for people with
Visual, Hearing and Physical Impairment.

KURZWEIL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS, INC.

411 Waverly Oaks Road
Waltham, MA 02154
(617) 893-8200
FAX: (617) 893-4157

Product Description: Educational Software.

LERNOUT & HAUSPIE, INC

52 Third Avenue
Burlington, MA 01803
1-800-894-5374
FAX (781) 203-5033

Develops the Kurzweil 1000 for people who are blind or severely
visually impaired, and Kurzweil 3000 for people with Dyslexia or other
reading difficulties.

MAGNISIGHT, INC.

3360 Adobe Court
Colorado Springs, CO 80907

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 2653
Colorado Springs, CO 80901
(719) 578-8893
FAX: (719) 578-9887

Product Description: CCTV Manufacturer.

MAXI-AIDS

1-800-522-6294

One of the largest distributors of products for people with Special Needs. They have several thousand high and low-tech products for daily living.

MICROTALK

(903) 832-3471

A small, independent software publishing company specializing in innovative solutions that let blind people effectively use the PC with speech synthesis.

NANOPAC, INC

4823 South Sheridan Road, Suite 302
Tulsa, OK 74145-5717
(918) 665-0329
FAX (918) 665-0361

Provides a full range of products for blindness, low vision, quadriplegia, nonverbal, reading disabilities, voice recognition and voice activated environmental controls.

OKAY VISION-AIDE CORP.

14811 Myford Road
Tustin, CA 92780-7253
1-800-325-4488
FAX (714) 669-1081

OVAC provides affordable CCTV magnifiers, ranging from the black & white hand scanner to a desktop color unit with auto focus & zoom.

OPTELEC U.S., INC.

6 Lyberty Way
Westford, MA 01886
1-800-828-1056
(978) 392-0707
FAX: (978) 692-6073

Product Description: Low Vision Magnifiers, CCTV's.

OCUTECH, INC.

109 Conner Drive, Suite 2105
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
1-800-326-6460
(919) 967-6460

Low Vision Magnifiers, CCTV's

PRODUCTIVITY WORKS

7 Belmont Circle
Trenton, NJ 08618
(609) 984-8044
FAX (609) 984-8048

PW WebSpeak, a speaking Internet browser compatible with Sound Blaster.

PULSE DATA INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

351 Thornton Road, Suite 119
Lithia Springs, GA 30122
1-888-734-8439
FAX (770) 941-7722

A designer and manufacturer of leading edge technology for people who are visually impaired. Product range includes speech synthesizers, computer programs and talking notebook computers for blind individuals, and closed circuit television (CCTV) reading systems for partially sighted individuals.

RAPIDTEXT

180 Dove Street, Suite 101
Newport Beach, CA 92660
(949) 399-9200

Product Description: Remote or on-sight captioning for technical reading material.

REPROTRONICS, INC.

75 Carver Avenue
Westwood, NJ 07675
1-800-948-8453
FAX: (201) 722-1881
Email: davesrepro@aol.com

Product Description: Tactile products for blind and visually impaired.

R.J. COOPER ASSOCIATES

24843 Del Prado #283
Dana Point, CA 92629
1-800-752-6673
FAX (949) 240-9785

Software, hardware, and Assistive Technology, category Special Needs or Assistive Technology, caption: Our assistive technology enables people with disabilities to do more with computers. They have developed products for persons with very special needs, including special software and hardware adaptations.

SEEDLINGS BRAILLE BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

P.O. Box 51924
Livonia, MI 48151-5924
1-800-777-8552
FAX (313) 427-8552

A non-profit, tax-exempt organization dedicated to providing high quality, low-cost Braille books for children. From contemporary literature to well-loved classics. Seedlings offers over 270 low-cost Braille books for children.

SIGHTED ELECTRONICS INC.

464 Tappan Road
Northvale, NJ 07647
1-800-666-4883
(201) 767-3977
FAX: (201) 767-0612

Product Description: Index Braille Printers and Thiel Braille Printers.

SLATER SOFTWARE, INC.

351 Badger Lane
Guffey, CO 80820
(719) 479-2255
FAX (719) 479-2254

This company provides software for Picture It, a program for language and literacy skills, PixWriter for beginning writers, PixReader which adds speech to Picture It documents.

SUMMIT TECH SERVICES

13453 Colfax Highway
Grass Valley, CA 95945
(530) 274-8176
FAX (520) 274-8177

Sales/Service/Mfg. Products for the blind & visually impaired.
Specializing in 4-track modified tape recorders, speech synthesizers,
and the exciting new "Quick Study" universal speech compression
speakers, works with most tape recorders on the market.

SYNAPSE

3095 Kerner Blvd., Suite S
San Rafael, CA 94901
1-888-285-9988
FAX (415) 455-9801

Providing a catalog of the adaptive and assistive technology.

SYNTHA-VOICE COMPUTERS, INC.

304-800 Queenston Road
Stoney Creek, Ont. L8G 1A7 CANADA
1-800-263-4540
(905) 662-0565
FAX: (905) 662-0568
Email: help@synthavoice.on.ca

Product Description: Screen access software for the blind using
speech, Braille or large print output for DOS, Windows 3.1+ and
Windows 95.

TECHNOLOGY FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED, INC.

9 Nolan Court
Hauppauge, NY 11788
(516) 724-4479
FAX: (516) 724-4479

Product Description: RoButron Rainbow Reading Machine, Eureka A4 Laptop, Aria Palm Top, Columbus Talking Compass and other products.

TELESENSORY CORPORATION

520 Almanor Avenue
Sunnyvale, CA 94086
1-800-804-8004
(408) 616-8700
FAX: (408) 616-8720

Product Description: A family of closed circuit televisions (CCTVS) both black and white and color, various screen sizes and magnification ranges. Also, screen magnification system for Windows 95.

TELEX COMMUNICATIONS, INC.

9600 Aldrich Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55420
(612) 887-7498
FAX (612) 884-0043

This company provides Telex talking book products. Narrator is rugged, lightweight, impact resistant cassette player. The Tutor is a compact version of the Narrator.

VISION TECHNOLOGY, INC.

8501 Delport Drive
St. Louis, MO 63114
1-800-560-7226
(314) 890-8300
FAX (314) 890-8383
Email: vti@visiontechinc.com

Product Description: manufacture and distribute the MousCam video magnification system for individuals with low vision. The MousCam is a full featured hand held CCTV which is easy to use and will connect to any TV.

VISIONICS CORPORATION'S LOW VISION ENHANCEMENT SYSTEM

1000 Boone Avenue North, Suite 600
Minneapolis, MN 55427
1-800-507-4448
FAX (612) 544-4784

A head-mounted display that can be custom-tailored to provide an enhanced video display to persons with severe vision impairment.

WORDS +

1220 West Avenue J
Lancaster, CA 93534-2902
1-800-869-8521
(661) 723-6523

This company provides: Communication Software, Communication Systems, Hand-Held Communication, Input/Speech Devices, Hardware & Accessories

XEROX ADAPTIVE PRODUCTS

9 Centennial Drive
Peabody, MA 01960
(978) 977-2000
FAX: (978) 977-2148

Product Description: The Reading Edge reading machine, is a Book-wise, interactive PC-based software, for individuals who have reading disabilities.